BULLETIN OF THE INSTITUTE OF TRADITIONAL CULTURES MADRAS-5

1980

JULY—DECEMBER

Special Number (continued)

Silver Jubilee year of the Institute of Traditional Cultures, Madras and the Post Centenary Silver Jubilee year of the University of Madras (1982)

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UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS
MADRAS-600005, INDIA.

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INSTITUTE OF TRADITIONAL CULTURES

Madras-5

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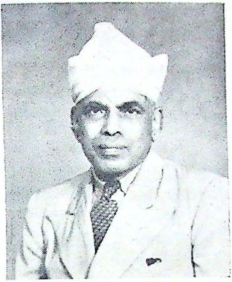

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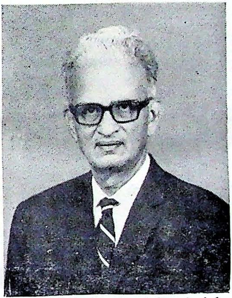

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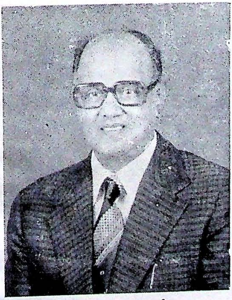

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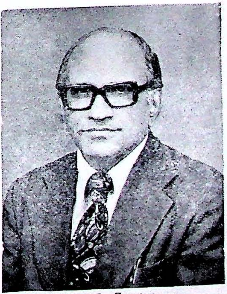

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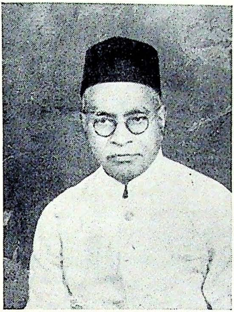

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PREFACE

The Bulletin contains articles on traditions and culture of South and South East Asia besides articles on Tamil traditions and culture. The International system of diacritical marks has been adopted to the extent possible, in the Bulletin.

To mark the Silver Jubilee of the Institute of traditional Cultures we are glad to publish the photos of the successive Vice Chancellors of the Madras University who functioned as Presidents of the Institute and the Directors of the Institute since its inception in 1957 to-date. The great interest they evinced in the growth of the Institute all these years has helped it in its activities to fulfil its main aim viz, to disseminate information regarding the traditions and cultures of South and and South East Asia. We are glad to publish in this number an author Index with titles of papers and themes of Seminars with which they are associated and the issues of the Bulletin in which they were published from the inception of the Institute in 1957 in order to serve as a reference material for Research scholars and other readers to enable them buy the publication in which they have interest, from the Registrar, University of Madras.

The Institute is grateful to all the scholars who have contributed articles, delivered lectures and led seminars on a variety of themes pertaining to traditional cultures which appear in this issue.

We are grateful to the Government of Tamil Nadu as well the Government of India for the continuance of their financial assistance to the Institute.

The University of Madras continues to accommodate the Institute in its building, providing it with necessary amenities and bears the entire cost of the paper and printing of the Bulletin. The Institute is grateful to the University for all the valuable help, which enables it to carry on its activities.

The Institute is thankful to the Heads and staff members of the Departments of the University and Research scholars for their kind and hearty co-operation in the activities of the Institute.

We are thankful to our beloved President, Dr. M. Santappa, Vice Chancellor, University of Madras for the great interest evinced by him in the affairs of the Institute.

The Governing Body and the Executive Committee of the Institute have also given us valuable assistance in running the Institute and they deserve our sincere thanks.

Madras, P. THIRUGNANASAMBANDHAN,
22nd May 1984. *Director.*

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The authors of the articles and other contributions that appear in the Bulletin are responsible for the statement of facts or expression of opinions contained therein. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute.

HINDU ASTROLOGY

BY

KADALANGUDI Dr. (Mrs) K. N. SARASWATHY,

Astrology formed the basis of all ancient faiths and mythology. Its history is coeval with the history of the earliest civiiizations. The oldest known scriptures of the world, the VEDAS, are the fundamental scriptures of the Hindus. Astrology is a limb of the VEDA; it is called JYOTIR VEDA; it is India's glorious heritage. It rose out of a farflung ferment of intellect attuned to an extraordinary temper of scientific inquiry. The growth was organic and original, and, it left its indelible impression on all aspects Indian, be they of civilization or culture. Astrology was indissolubly interwoven with the life of the Hindus, nay, most Indians.

Hindu astrology is seen to be the most ancient and the most influential school of astrology in the world.

Ancient Hindu savants combined intuition with observation. Using mathematical tools, they speculated on thc universe, its age, the dimensions of galaxies. They fashioned astrology as a tool for observing the beyond in time, and to examine man's kinship with cosmos. They pressed scientific investigations into service for determining the place and meaning of human beings and for utilization of the knowledge for improving the lot of human beings.

Thus was devised astrology to facilitate humans to live in tune with the 'music of the stars'. Celestial movements and their effects on matter and beings were observed for years — nay, aeons — through yogic 'śakti' by ancient Rishis (Hindu sages). Hundreds of combinations influencing every phase of mundane and spiritual existence were experienced, and the principles were embodied into postulates more than 10,000 years ago — truths which had stood the test of time;

they surprisingly come true even today. They can be tested with the 'blue litmus of knowledge' and the 'red litmus of experience'.

In other words, the Rishis attained to the "heightened awareness of the universe" around them and comprehended great cosmic truths. Hndu astrology was fashioned out of these sages' awareness of cosmic setting of their planet. This view can be contrasted with some of the western ones, according to which mere material forces were sufficient to account for the universe, its origin and its end.

Condemnation of astrology:

Time and again newspapers and journals either in their editorials or reports of statements from physical scientists and others accuse astrology to be a 'pseudo-science' based on imprecise astronomical observations made some 2,000 years ago on which are superimposed myth, fancy and superstition born of fear of the unknown. Such condemnation stems from sheer prejudice.

Kepler, a modern votary of astrology, has gone on record as saying that "a most unfailing experience of the excitement of sublunary natures by the conjunctions and aspects of the planets has instructed and compelled my unwilling belief".

Dr. John Butler, a church Minister, examined astrology with a view to condemning it, but he became so convinced of its truth that he wrote a vindication of it:

> "...yet by this means attaining to understand who it was that I spoke to, it begat in me a reverence to those gray hairs, which, as unjustly as ignorantly, I had despised."

From Oliver of Malmesbury, the oldest writer in English on mathematics, through mathematicians like Roger Bacon, John of Halifax, to Robert Recorde, the first to adopt the system of Copernicus in England, we find mathematicians to have been good astrologers. Poets who have praised astrology

are Virgil, Homer, Chaucer, Dante, Milton, Dryden, Byron, Scott; Shakespeare, etc.

Didacus Placidus de Titus, an Italian monk, was a mathematician and a specialist in astrology. In his book PRIMUM MOBILE he has furnished the nativities of thirty famous Europeans with the object of demonstrating the reliability of astrology.

Astrology : Its scope :

Man is the microcosm; the universe with all the planets is the macrocosm. Astrology seeks to correlate astronomical facts wiih terrestrial events, seeks to study this high drama of cosmic and terrestrial interaction, its constellations, planets, their mutual configurations and distances. Astrology was indeed the 'calculus' of this immensely complex but fascinating kinship of man and space. Cosmos was not a chaos; life was only a microcosmic expression of the clearly discernible macrocosmic order. Astrology can therefore interpret the basic facts and instinctive urges of individual life, socio-economic facts of human societies and historic upheavals.

Corroboration by modern scientific findings :

At least some, if not all, of this ancient wisdom of Hindu sages has been amply corroborated by modern scientific findings. Certain planetary dispositions which coincided with sunspot maxima and minima, were found to influence weather in a perceptible manner; they indicated character traits — indications which were found by western doctors useful in psychiatry to aid diagnosis and treatment. The scientific truth behind astrology had now been adequately vindicated all over the world by reputed scholars like Nelson of USA, Tomaschek of Germany, Carl Jung of Switzerland.

Space explorations have today banished the concept that space is empty but is an inter-planetary world filled wtih subtle and complex forces and radiations. H. L. Koning of Munich demonstrated that the atmosphere contained waves of

extremely low frequency of one to ten hertz units and that this invariably affected the sprouting of wheat, the growth of bacteria and the activity of insects which destroy the crops.

Dr. Brown of Yale University proved that there was a characteristic correspondence between their oxygen consumption and the changes in the barometric readings of pressure which were correlated to the planetary movements and placements He remarked:

> " The potatoes, carrots, algae, etc.—
> all know where the Moon is."

His remark was prompted by the striking similarity between their metabolic rate and the lunar day. He felt that the changes in the potential of trees followed a cycle tuned in with cosmic cycles, especially the phases of the Moon.

Bunning has showed that the Sun's radiation gets affected by the difference in placement of the other planets in their orbits of motion at such times. This was responsible for different rates of germination of seeds in the same season of two different years.

The vegetable, animal and human bodies have fluids containing electrodes which receive the cosmic rays. The Moon exercises a cumulative gestating influence on them. This is noticeable from the effects of different lunar aspects; these lunar effects cause, through the media of solar energy, all the manifestations in our universe ('brahmāṇda'). It means that all living things regulate their activity in response to the stimuli of outer space, whether they are waves, particles, or perturbances of a magnetic or gravitational nature. (This was the observation of George Lakhovsky.)

The various types of nuclear radiations such as charged particle radiations namely Alpha-rays (Helium nuclei), Beta rays (energetic electrons) and protons, natural particles called neutrons and electromagnetic radiations namely the Gamma-rays cnd X-rays would interact with all forms of matter in

its molecular form not in an individualistic way but in different permutations and combinations thereby causing largely diversified and complex life activity analogous to chemical reactions on the earth and also in the cosmos.

The 'Puruṣa-sūkta' of ṚG VEDA says that the Sun originated from the eye of the Supreme Lord and that the Moon was born of the mind of the Supreme. Knowing that these two were stars, the Rishis accorded the rank of Deity (Devatā) to the Sun because his radiation was the principal source of power, energy, activity, in short, life on earth.[1]

The natal chart & its significance :

The impact of these complex combinations of radiations could be mathematically deduced with respect to any individual from his natal chart called 'horoscope'. A horoscope gives not only a vivid picture of the set-up of concentration of metal ions in the native's body woven into an incorrigible psycho-physiological fabric but also the changes he would be subjected to in course of time by the same till his passing away. The chief features of man's life are always in accordance with the constellation he is born under or with the characteristics of its animating principle or the deity that presides over it.

Free will & destiny :

Planets indicate the nature of the development or unfolding of destinies of individuals (groups, nations, etc.) in strict accordance with individual (and collective) Karma. These indications are read by practitioners of predictive astrology for the benefit of clients and inquirers who may care to consult them. Classics on the subjects discuss and answer how and in what manner the planetary indications are to be read and interpreted.

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1. Refer the author's book NAVAGRAHAS for the Origin of Planets & Myths & Legends related.

It is possible to exercise freedom of the will to the extent of accepting or rejecting what one's horoscope indicates; but the consequences of rejection cannot be controlled. If for example proneness to rheumatism is denoted, the native may take precautions against them and hope to minimise his/her suffering. Alternatively, he/she may ignore the warning, but he/she cannot stop the consequences.

If only man is aware that by every action, thought or feeling that he is generating, he is awakening the corresponding powers in the sidereal world, the potency of a knowledge of astrology will then be patent. No past can distress us, if we appreciate that it is our own creation, that the hand which smites us is our own, and that we cannot blame God or devil or our fellowmen for it, and that it is not the star that brings affliction or happiness but only a writing on the wall. This brings us to the corollary that what we do NOW by acts, thoughts and feelings are to be the writing on the wall of our future. As each individual is his own creator, his future personality will be the result of his present mode of living. In the same manner our present birth, with all its conditions, vicissitudes of ups and downs is the tree grown out of the seed sown in past incarnations. As we sow, so we reap; and the present is the child of the past; and as there is but ONE LIFE that holds together all the planets of the Solar System, the position of the planets at the time of birth — an event culminating in the aggregate result of the causes already generated — give to the astrologist the clue, the data — or call it the Pass Book detailing one's accounts in the Bank — upon which to base his predictions.[2]

Qualifications of an astrologist:

The correctness of astrological predictions depends upon the competence of the astrologist and the accuracy of the birth data furnished to him. Even the approximate birth time given can of course be corrected.

---

2. K. N. Saraswathy, Anga Vidyā, Preface.

Astrology is of course not an empirical science: it is an intuitive science which uses a language of symbols. The "signs of the zodiac" are not merely signs but are symbols, that is, they are pregnant with layer on layer of meaning. A particular sign in astronomy means no more than the planet Mercury, but in astrology it is a symbol representing a restless mind, ever-probing human intellect, mastery of words, etc.

The Sun, the Moon, planets, constellations (such as Aries), the 12 houses, and the degrees presented on the horoscope are all symbols in astrology. They become symbols in the same manner as, say, the Hindu 'linga' or the Christian 'cross'. The rational mind cannot grasp the significance of the symbols as represented on a horoscope, because there are so many of them with varying degrees of relationship with one another and with an infinite variety of meaning. A computer cannot do it either, because the content of each symbol is unlimited and therefore, programming is impossible.

The process of 'reading' a horoscope, therefore, can be done only by 'intuition'. Jung defines intuition as perception via the unconscious. Contemplation of the symbols, in their relationship with one another, induces in the astrologist a state of awareness; this awareness extends beyond his specific consciousness; hence this awareness extends beyond relative time. Thus he apprehends the 'past' and forecasts the 'future'. The process of divination by other predictive devices such as palmistry, numerology, Tarot cards, and so on, is similar.

Jung named this process "the transcendent function" because by this function "a transition is made possible from the one attitude to the other". (In this context he does not attach any metaphysical connotations to the word 'transcendent.)

A difference of 20 or 21 degrees between western and Indian calculations is there and Neptune, Uranus and Pluto, which figure in the western system, are not taken into account in the Indian system; but the results obtained by the two

systems coincide.[3] Dealing with such a small difference in values elsewhere between the calculations in the two systems, Pearce says that this proves that the Indian astronomers' calculation was correct and founded upon *observation*.[4]

(Since the term 'astrologist' sounds like 'scientist', I prefer it to 'astrologer'.) The astrologist needs worship of God and the blessings of the guru who taught him/her. The ability of the astrologist to 'read' a horoscope depends on his understanding of vast depths of meaning contained in the symbols, a good sense of judgement and interpretation, and the powers of verbal expression that he has.

Pitfalls in predicting:

The zodiac of 12 houses are in Hindu Astrology called 'Bhāvas'. Broadly and roughly they respectively indicate the following:

1. body 2. family 3. brothers 4. relatives
5. children 6. enemy 7. spouse 8. death
9. fortune 10. position 11. gain 12. loss.

The predictive faculty stems not so much from academic knowledge, which is essential, as from intuition. And intuition stems from experience, and experience in the field is got by the experimental study of a few thousands of horoscopes, comparing the academic view that each horoscope presents with the actual events in the native's life.

Even the most determined books on astrology can only hint at their meaning. That is why we cannot expect interpretations by two astrologists being alike, though there will be a close correspondence between them.

"phalāni grahacāreṇa sūcayanti manīṣiṇah I
ko vaktā tāratamyasya tam ekam vedhasam vinā II"

---

3. K. N. Saraswathy PICTORIAL HINDU ASTROLOGY & MARRIAGE
4. THE TEXTBOOK OF ASTROLOGY: footnote on p 115.

Forecasting must be guided by the knowledge, that knowledge is limited by its nature and that he is dealing with intangibles and that none else except the Creator can foretell with certainty what will happen. This knowledge is bound to instil utmost modesty in every astrologist. That is to say, the astrologist must not claim infallibility.

Secondly, the text that one follows as basic text must not be spurious. It must be reliable.

Thirdly, the study must be of one system consistently, although verification may be done through other systems too. (The freezing and boiling of water are consistent; the difference is in the scale or system: 0° C = 32° F; 100° C = 212° F.)

Fourthly, the astrologist must have patience, fortitude and devotion. Over enthusiasm, vanity and rashness will be calamitous in making predictions.

However promising a horoscope may be, it is not worthwhile to study its future unless a long life is assured.

Astrological guidance & counselling for marriage:

As is widely known, astrology enjoys a special position in India; it is integrated into Indian social life; "even villages have their own astrologers fairly well-versed in the subject." (NASO INTERNATIONAL ASTROLOGICAL DIRECTORY). In India these artrologists are approached for marriage guidance and counselling as well as for other problems. Astrologists utilize the occasion for giving pre-marital guidance and counselling too; naturally post-marital guidance and counselling too is sought and given.[5]

Parents/elders are very particular to see if the horoscope of the boy and the girl to be married match astrologically so that marriage will be stable and harmonious. Compatibility or agreement between the bride and the bridegroom will not only

5. K. N. Saraswathy, PICTORIAL HINDU ASTROLOGY & MARRIAGE, page 185.

ensure that the marriage is not wrecked but it fulfills some social and spiritual objectives. Marriage is not only for pleasure, but also for mental, moral and spiritual growth and realization of self of the partners. In the four-fold objectives of marriage – (virtue), Artha (economic status), Kāma (fulfilment of desires) and Mokṣa (absolute salvation), it is obvious that Kāma comes third in the list. The wedded couple have an equal share in Dharma, and so, the man takes his wife for being a Dharma-Patnī. That she is in no way inferior, and that she is his partner and companion is denoted by the term 'saha-dharmiṇī'. Staying married is considered an extra-ordinarily great phenomenon, a notable landmark and achievement. When the husband is 60 and the wife is alive, the jubilee called 'ṣaṣṭi-abda-pūrti' is celebrated. When past 81, the jubilee called 'Śata-abhiṣeka' is celebrated. This is mainly to felicitate them on their marvellous record of having stayed married and take their blessings. On that memorable occasion they are regarded as Lord Śiva and His consort Śakti or Lord Vishṇu and His consort Lakshmī. The Indian marriage is not merely for the married couple but for upholding the 'grihasthāśrama dharma', meaning, to be of service to the community and transmit culture to the offspring and through them to posterity.

The community too interacts by helping the couple to stay married. The role that astrology plays in this is not a little.

Conclusion :

A ṚG VEDIC verse describes how 18 sages — like Sūrya and Vyāsa – have written classics on astrology. Varāhamihira wrote treatises on astrology (about 1300 years ago) based on these texts. While beginning his BRIHAT JĀTAKA he says ;

> Bhūyobhiḥ paṭubuddhibhiḥ paṭudhiyā horā phalajñaptaye
> Śabda nyāya samanviteṣu bahuśaḥ Śāstreṣu drṣṭeṣvapi |
> Horā tantra mahārṇava pratarane bhagnodymānām aham
> Svalpam vṛtta vicitram artha bahulam Śāstraplavam ārabhe ||

" Many intelligent persons have tried to understand the good and bad karmas of their past lives by frequent study of several treatises on astrology written by talented writers in good style but to no avail. I have therefore endeavoured to construct this small boat of a scientific work in a brief form but with several interpretations for the benefit of not only the specialist but also for the layman, to enable him to cross this vast ocean of astrology."

Astrology has been verily an ocean even to Varāhamihira, and so it has been impossible for me to do justice within the short space of this paper. As Paul Brunton (the noted biographer of Sage Ramaṇa) observes, life is not a cast-iron thing because there the forces of fate and free will play upon us, and the stimuli resulting are a mixture of both. Our own free will once created our present destiny; so we can create something even now; to that end astrology will help us by indicating how best our endowments can be used and how we can be guided by astrology in our actions. Alan Leo would put it this way:

> "We have made our character what it is; the horoscope represents us as we have made ourselves, and we have the task before us of evolving higher qualities. The different vibrations indicated by the planets may be used by us as a skilled gardener uses his tools— for the cultivation of the garden of the soul."

SOME ASPECTS OF SAKTI WORSHIP

BY

DR. S. MEERA,

Dept. of Sanskrit, University of Madras.

Mankind has always felt the need of security and a prop to support it in dire circumstances. The terrifying natural phenomena, the diseases and sudden death aroused fright in man. In the process of explaining these, to obtain solace, the imaginative philosophic mind of mankind visualised the various Godheads of the world. In India too, for several centuries, the philosophic genius has evolved various concepts of the Godhead. Broadly, it is either Saguṇa, endowed with attributes, or nirguṇa - pure Brahman without attributes. While Saguṇa, it is conceived to be either masculine or feminine or even both combined as in ardhanāri - the androgynic form of Śiva. We might even venture to say that in the long history of philosophy in India, practically all the possibilities of deification have been exhausted. Even stones are worshipped as sāligrāmas and vigrahas. Mountains are often deified. There are hymns in the Rgveda to Soma, a creeper, vanaspati - the lord of the forest - a great tree and oṣadhayaḥ - medicinal herbs. In Rāmāyaṇa, we come across Sītā praying to a great banyan tree. Elementals like the fire, wind, water, cloud (Parjanya) and lightning are personified and viewed as being endowed with significant characteristics. Dawn and Night are personified as deities and twin Goddesses. The planets are also deified.

The concept of Godhead as the mother has always been charming to men as that is the nearest relation that can be conceived of between two persons. While a man thinks of God as his mother, he feels all the more close to the deity and the feeling of security and solace obtained is immense. There are innumerable Goddesses in the Hindu tradition

worshipped either separately or as consorts of Gods. But we have a verse saying that no matter whether the worshippers are Śaivites or Vaiṣṇavites, all the twice-born are only worshippers of Śakti, i.e. Sāktas, as they all worship the primordial Vedic Goddess Gāyatrī thrice daily before offering any other special worship —

" Sarve Śāktāḥ dvijāḥ proktā na
Śaivā na ca Vaiṣṇavāḥ |
Ādidevīm upāsante Gāyatrīm
Vedamātaram ||

The Śakti cult is wide spread in the whole of India - in the north and north-west. Tārā is worshipped in Tibet and Kashmir; In North-east, Kālī is specially worshipped in Bengal; in the Kerala region in South-west, the cult of Bhagavatī is popular. In the southern regions like Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the tantric version of Śakti cult like the Śrī Vidyā cult is very ancient. In the Śakti cult, the supreme deity is Devī or the female principle that personifies the universal energy and man's inherent psychic power. The Eternal Word of the Veda, Vāk becomes nāda - sound by ādyā spanda - a first throb. This nāda gives rise to letters - bījākṣaras which form mantras. With the aid of the Guru who teaches the mantras the tantric aspirant by worshipping yantras or material representations and by practising yogasādhana, the act of which is Tantra, realises the supreme being in this very life without forsaking the material world to attain the spiritual world.

The concept of the Mother Goddess is common to all ancient and modern civilizations. In Christianity, we have the worship of Virgin Mary, secret cults of Black Mary; various feminine saints as St. Cecilia, the patron of music, St. Catherine, St. Anne and others. In France, Joan of Arc is worshipped. In Greek civilization we have Pallas Athena, Diana and others. This concept of Mother Goddess is considered to be the outcome of primitive fertility rites. All over the ancient world from Indus to Nile, terracotta figurines have

been found and these are representations of Mother Goddesses. They have wide girdles, elaborate head-dresses and are always nude. The glyphic art of Harappa has yielded some figurines emphasising the Mother Goddess' connection with the vegetable world. On a seal an aśvattha tree with two branches springs forth from a circle on the ground. A female deity with long hair and a pair of horns, nude, stands between the branches. Another seal depicts a female figure also nude, upside down with legs wide open. A plant issues out of her womb. A terracotta ceiling belonging to early Gupta period from Bhita-Uttarpradesh also depicts a female upside down figure with wide open legs but a lotus issues out of her neck. In Nāgārjuna Koṇḍa there is a huge stone sculpture of Mother Goddess seated with legs wide apart without the upper part of the body. A similar sculpture has been enshrined in Alampur, Andhrapradesh. Terracottas also from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and Koṇḍāpūr have been found with the identical theme. Indus Valley sites like Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Chanhudaro, etc. have yielded apart from terracotta figurines, ring stones, phalli and similar objects. This may tend to show the association of fetish worship with the cult of Śakti. In Kerala even today Bhagavatī is often represented by a stone and she is worshipped in hypaethral temples. A verse in Silappadikāram refers to a shrine with a stone as the object of worship (Nedungal ninra manram)[1]. In Kerala in almost all temples, the Saptamātṛkas (Brāhmī, Māheśwarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī and Chāmuṇḍī) are represented by seven circnlar cyclindrical stones. Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa are represented in a separate row of two more stones, Some scholars have tried to trace back the origin of the idea of the Saptamātṛkas to the Harappan period. In all the Śaktipīṭhas a stone represents the severed limb of Śakti.[2] In the evolution of aniconic

1. K R Srinivasan: "Some aspects of religion as revealed by early monuments and literature of the South" — Journal of the Madras University XXXII No. 1 (1960) Page 135.

2. J. N. Banerjea: "The Development of Hindu Iconography, Calcutta (1956)" Page 83. 'That the concept of Saktipīthas was well known in the 7th century is evident from the testimony of Hiuen Tsang.'

representation of Mother Goddess the culmination is in the form of Chakras and yantras of the Śakti cult. Banerjea compares these with the prehistoric ring stones the strand of which tendency is seen also in the decorated stone discs and rings of the Maurya and Sunga periods.[3]

In the Vedas, we see several Goddesses portrayed in their own right as well as, as consorts of Gods. Goddess Aditi is described as the Generatrix, the mother of the devas. Goddess Sarasvatī is praised as the best of mothers, the best of rivers and also the best of devis (Ambi-tame nadī devi-tame Sarasvatī). Uṣas, the Goddess of dawn is described tenderly and beautifully. Rātrī, Goddess Night is described significantly as the cousin of Uṣas. She is not gruesomely conceived as pitch darkness but as the harbinger of divine dawn with great potent power; as one who paves the way for the divine process of daybreak; as the conferer of hard-earned rest for beings and as a restorer of energy. The Srī sūktas of the four vedas glorify Lakshmī as the giver of wealth, fame and all auspicious things. Here she is identified with Sun and Moon. She is the *lord* of all beings. She has become the created beings out of pity and so she is asked to generate pity in the worshipper. Alakshmī or Jyeṣṭhā is mentioned here as being contrary to Lakshmī. Ilā, Sarasvatī and Bhāratī are grouped together as "Devyas tisrau" (the three Goddesses) and praised as "Tisro devīr mayobhuvah" (three Goddesses producers of delight). This triad might have inspired the classical triad of Durgā, Lakshmī and Sarasvatī. Vāk or speech is personified as a Goddess and in the 125th Sūkta of 10th maṇḍala of Ṛg veda we have a sublime philosophic hymn ascribed to Vāk, daughter of Ambhṛṇa called Vāgāmbhṛṇī. Later the same Sūkta has been called devīsūkta and the speaker is identified as Devī. The subject of the hymn in early times had also been simply called ātmā. Herein the speaker declares that she supports the mudrās, the vasus, the ādityas, viśvedevās, Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra, Agni, the two Aśvins, Soma (Moon), Trastā, Pūṣan and

3. Ibid. pp 168-71 and 488,

Bhaga; that she favours the pious sacrificer; that she is the queen, the delighter of the intellect (chikituṣi), the leader among the deities who deserve oblation; that she resides within everyone; that through her only man eats his food, perceives clearly and hears well; that all rest in her being unaware of it; that she makes a man whom she favours into a fierce and powerful being, into a priest, a sage or a great intellectual; that she it is who bends the bow for Rudra (she is Rudra's Śakti) so that she might strike his arrows upon the enemies of Gods; that she has created the battle for men; that she has entered the whole earth and heaven; that she has created the Father (Prajāpati? Rudra?); that she resides within the waters and oceans and from there extends through the whole universe and touches even heaven; that she herself flows as the wind starting the creation of the worlds and the universe. This grand hymn must have given a great impetus to the Śakti cult as such vast powers are attributed to this speaker and later on to Devi.

During the classical period and later during the upaniṣadic and purāṇic period we have the development of the triad of Brahmā, Vishṇu, Śiva and Durgā, Lakshmī, Sarasvatī. In the Śakti cult the primordial principle is naturally Devi herself. In the Devīmāhātmya of Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa the following process of creation has been given. At the beginning there was only Supreme Mahālakshmī. From her emanated Sarasvatī full of Satvaguṇa, Lakshmī full of rajo guṇa and Mahākālī full of tamoguṇa. From Sarasvatī arose Gaurī and Vishṇu. From Lakshmī, (another) Lakshmī and Hiraṇyagarbha and from Mahākālī, (another) Sarasvatī and Rudra. These deities in the lowest rung are those who form the trimūrtis with their spouses looking after creation, sustenance and destruction.

Though in the Śakti cult, Śaivite Goddesses are mainly worshipped all Goddesses have been included with a great sweep within the folds of Śakti cult. Almost all Gods have their female counterparts worshipped in this manner. And so we have Vārāhī, Nārasimhī, Kaumārī, Vaishṇavī, Aindrī and similar Goddesses.

Lakshmī is often worshiped separately. She is the giver of all auspiciousness, fame and wealth. In all the four vedas we have different śrī sūktas glorifying Lakshmī. There are eight chief forms of Lakshmī called aṣṭalakshmis. The original primordial form is called *Ādilakshmī*. Lakshmi flanked on either side by elephants bathing her is worshiped as *Gajalakshmī*. Lakshmi seated on a lotus without any attributes has been called *Sāmānyalakshmī*. Lakshmi worshipped in the form of a queen depicted with Kirīṭa and other royal emblems is called *Rājalakshmī*. When she is bestowing wealth, she is called *Aiśvaryalakshmī* or *Dhanalakshmī*. When she is meditatiug seated in yogāsana, she is *Yogalakshmī*. When she bestows victory in war, she is *Jayalakshmī* or *Vīralakshmī*. When she assures prosperity, she is *Dhānyalakshmī*. She is also worshipped as Mahālakshmī, the chief among all these emanations. A special characteristic of Mahālakshmī is said to be the mark of a linga on the forehead. Lakshmī is often associated with Sovereignty and called Rājyaśrī or Rājyalakshmī. She is considered to be the first wife of any monarch who is a veritable portion of Vishṇu. The word Lakshmī itself connotes mainly beauty, fame, in short auspiciousness itself. In the Bhāṣya of Mahīdhara the word has been explained as 'yā lakshyate, dṛśyate janaiḥ, sā lakshmīḥ saundaryam ityarthah'. One who is seen (delights the eye) is Lakshmi, Beauty herself.

Sarasvatī, the Goddess of learning is also worshipped separately. She is called Mahāvidyā, Āryā, Bhāratī, Ilā and Vāṇī. She is worshipped chiefly by students, intellectuals, artisans, spiritual aspirants and the like. She also has a hoary past. In the Veda she is invoked as a river, the mother and a devi. Sometimes, she is conceived to be a consort of Vishṇu, but she is more often associated with Brahmā. Sarasvatī means one who is endowed with waters (rasa being one of the synonyms of water). Water in the vedic symbology often meant conciousness and so she is the Goddess of intellect. She is Goddess of all arts and she herself delights in playing the lute, the Viṇā. As she is the consort of Brahmā, all four vedas are at her beck and call. She is

endowed with great spiritual power and is also conceived as the conferrer of spiritual powers. She is identified with Goddess Vāk. Vāk has been praised in the āprisūkta of Ṛgveda as the fourfold speech - Parā, Paśyanti, Madhyamā and Vaikharī of which only the last is explicit and spoken by men. Here she is figuratively spoken as Vākdhenu. In the Śatapatha brāhmaṇa (3. 1. 9. 7) Sarasvati is identified explicitly with Vākdevi - 'Vāg vai sarasvati mantram so 'smin vākyamātrādhiṣṭhātrī devī sarasvati vāk' - the Goddess Vāk herself is Sarasvati. In the portion of this mantra, one who presides over the vākya or sentence alone is called devī Sarasvati otherwise known as Vāk. Hence she is also called Vāgīśvarī. Later on in Yoga vāsistha, the name Sarasvati has been explained thus 'Śaraṇāt sarvadṛṣṭīnām kathitaiṣā Sarasvati' (6-2-84-12). She is called Sarasvati as she is the one who reveals all the Jñāna dṛṣṭis - inner visions belonging to different modes of worship, Upāsanā.

Durgā means one who is difficult to approach. This fierce form of Devi has been worshipped along with the pacific form of Jagadambā or Bhuvaneśvarī. This terrific aspect has been the core of the Śakti cult. Durgā has been adored as Kātyāyanī and Mahiṣāsuramardinī. She is said to be the Yogamāyā of Vishṇu. She is also called Chaṇḍikā. Devīmāhātmya graphically describes how she arose as a mass of effulgence from Brahmā, Vishṇu, Śiva, Indra, Yama and all other Gods for fighting with Mahiṣāsura. The motif of the combat between Devi and Mahiṣa has been traced to the Gupta period. Miniature stone reliefs of Bhita and relief carved on the facade of the Udayagiri cave near Vidiśā[4] have this theme. In South India, this motif became very popular and several representations are seen in Mahābalipuram, Gangaikoṇḍacholapuram, Māḍathukovil, Kanchipuram and other places. Nine forms of Durgā are described according to tradition as *Nīlakaṇṭhī, Kshemankarī, Harasiddhī, Rudrāmśadurgā, Vanadurgā, Agnidurgā, Vindhyāvāsi Durgā* and *Ripurnāridurgā*. The *Śaivāgama* and devīmāhātmya give a different sets of nine

4. For detailed description see J. N. Banerjea Op. cit. pp 497-502.

forms as *Śailaputrī*, *Brahmacāriṇi*, *Chandraghaṇṭā*, *Skandamātā*, *Kūṣmāṇḍadurgā*, *Kātyāyanī*, *Kālarātri*, *Mahāgaurī* and *Siddhidāyinī*. Of these the names Chandraghaṇṭā and Kūshmāṇḍa durgā are rather intriguing. Chandra, the moon is identical with Soma who is full of bliss. Chandraghaṇṭa will therefore mean one who is a personification of very pleasant bell like sound. Kūshmāṇḍa, taken literally, means a pumpkin.' But the name has been explained as follows - *Ku* means earth - *Ūshma* means heat (tapas). *Aṇḍa* means seed (bīja). This form of Durgā signifiies the power of heat or penance of Brahmā. When Brahmā incubated and vivified the *Brahmāṇḍa*, creation arose. In the early Tamil literature a Goddess similar to Durgā, has been mentioned. She is called *Koṟṟavai* and *Kāḍukiḷāḷ* (the mistress of the forests). She has a stag or lion for a mount.

In Paripāḍal an early sangam anthology coming under eṭṭuttogai, songs devoted to Koṟṟavai are seen. In Kalittogai, a similar work, the prayer song refers to Koṟṟavai. In the Vēṭṭuvavari of Silappadikāram, we have an elaborate description of Koṟṟavai. Herein, "she combined in her the concepts of Śiva, Vishṇu and Umā and in her attributes the three guṇas"[5]. Here she is considered to be the younger sister of Vishṇu and the spouse of Śiva. She is also said to be Jñānakoḷundu, Goddess of higher knowledge (Āyakalai) and hidden secrets of the vedas, and in another context Māyavaḷ (Silappadikaram VI, 59) pointing to the beginning of the devi being both Vidyāśakti (supreme knowledge) and Māyāśakti (Nescience)[6] She is said to have conquered Dāruka and Mahiṣāsura. Later on, Koṟṟavai practically got merged with Durgā. Kāli is said to have emanated from Durgā herself for the destruction of demons Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa. As she has destroyed these two demons, she has been called Chāmuṇḍā. She has been the chief diety of Kāpālikas.

The worship of Saptmātṛkas - the seven mothers has also been part of the Śakti cult. They are Brahmāṇī, Māheśwarī,

5. K. R. Srinivasan Op. cit., p. 153

6. Ibid p. 153.

Kaumāri, Vaishṇavi, Indrāṇi and Chāmuṇḍi. Often Gaṇesa and Virabhadra are worshipped along with these seven. Sometimes, a statue of Durgā is along with these. In Kerala, often they are represented by cylindrical stones. This has led some scholars to trace the origin of this worship to Harappan period, where similar stones are available. These seven mothers are said to have emanated from the male counterparts during Devi's war with Śumbha and Niśumbha to aid her in the battle. They have identical weapons, vehicles and characteristics as their male counterparts. Nārasimhi, the female counterpart of Narasimha has also been mentioned in this context in Devimāhātmya. The saptamātṛkās are seen in almost all Devi shrines and they are sometimes worshipped as *Sapta Kanyakās* in villages. *Chāmundā* who is none other than Kāli has a corpse for her seat. She is surrounded by goblins in an ideal sculpture. She is usually identified by the Krodha appearance and projecting canines. Vārāhi, who is the feminine aspect of Varāha, the Boar is identified by Hemādri with Yama. She rides on a buffalo. Vārāhi is allotted the southern quarters. She carries a pestle (musala) and plough (hala). In Lalitopākhyāna and Vārāhikalpa three forms are mentioned (viz) *Svapnavārāhi Daṇḍanāthavārāhi* and *Śuddhavārāhi*. *Dhūmravārāhi* is also known and she is considered to be identical with *Dhūmavathi* of the tantrics. Some of the saptamātṛkas also have trees sacred to them. For Kaumāri, it is the fig tree (Udumbara), for Vaishṇavi, it is the peepul; for Vārāhi, it is Karañja - pongamia glabra; for Indrāṇi, Kalpadruma and for Chāmuṇḍā it is the vaṭavṛkṣa, banyan tree.

The development of Śakti cult also owes largely to the concept of Sati. In her Sati avatāra, Parvati left her body in anger when her father Daksha insulted Śiva. Aggrieved Śiva refused to part with her body and carrying it with him roamed about in despair. As the lord of the universe was in such a condition, the functioning of the whole universe was affected and Vishṇu as the protector of the world, cut off with his Sudarśana Chakra, the body of Sati into several

pieces. Śiva in his extreme state of dejection failed to notice Vishṇu's action. Later on, Śiva himself installed lingas in all the places where pieces of Sati's body fell. This has led to the development and worship of Śaktipīṭhas. Their number is ten or twentysix according to texts. Later on preceptors like Ādiśaṅkara established Śaktipīṭhas in various places by installing yantras. The significance of Satī avatāra itself is given in Devi Bhāgavata. Once when Śiva and Vishṇu had vanquished an asura called Hālāhala, they aggrandised themselves because of the victory. Actually they were able to do it mereiy due to the power of Lakshmī and Gaurī. When the two husbands were boasting, Lakshmī and Gaurī smiled at each other. This led to the outbursts of Śiva and Vishṇu and the offended Devis withdrew all the powers from their consorts. While the functioning of the universe was thus impeded, Brahmā prayed to Jagadambā and by the penance of Brahmā's Mānasaputras-mindborn sons, Dakshas, Satī was revealed to them. She promised that Gaurī will be born to Daksha as Dākshāyaṇī and Lakshmī will arise out of the ocean during its churning for nectar to give back their power to Śiva and Vishṇu. This Satī avatāra concept, encouraged largely Śakti cult. We have also seen how the emanation of Durgā as a mass of effulgence from the prowess of each God has been described in Devī Māhātmya. This text gives the full philosophic import of Śakti cult. She is here the source of all divine and cosmic evolution. She is the embodiment of all guṇas; she is really the "formless absolute principle immanent in the whole universe as the supreme and all pervading consciousness, but the great Goddess also assumes various forms of pacific and terrific character (Saumyāni yāni rūpāṇi......yāni cātyanta ghorāṇi)[7] DM 4.26.

The Tantra is the special development of the Śakti cult. To a certain extent, tantra has been responsible for the breaking down of caste barriers. So long as the aspirants are within the chakra, the circle of practising aspirants, only tantric rules are applicable and caste barriers disappear. But once they

7. J. N. Banerjea Op. cit., p. 496.

leave the chakra and return to the society, they are resumed. The word tantra comes from tan-vistāre meaning expansion, elaboration. As this mode of practice calls for elaborate rituals this has been called 'tantra.' But a true tantric will never let these rituals engulf or eclipse his real goal of spirituality. In this path, three stages-paśu, vīra and divya bhāvas are seen. Paśu is one who unquestioningly and punctiliously performs all the rituals, follows the vedas meticulously without grasping the inner significances. Vīra is one who is aware of these significances but who also proceeds with the aid of the rituals. Divya is one who has reached a supreme state and has completely overcome the need for rituals. These are not tight, compartmentalised types of aspirants. But the same man undergoes these stages in his spiritual evolution, The tantric mode is based on the assumption that the macrocosm or the universe is present in its essential features in the microcosm, the man. The practice aims at activating the centres in the human plane to reach higher planes through tantric modes. A tantric sādhaka with the help of his guru awakens the Kuṇḍalinī Śakti in the mūlādhāra and step by step brings it up to the topmost centre of Sahasrāra Chakra. When the power reaches there, there follows supreme realisation and the Sādhaka obtains śivatva. This practice is done with the material representation of Chakras and yantras-by worshipping them and with the help of inner meditation. Tantra is not the exclusive possession of the Hindus. The Buddhists and Jains also adopt the tantric mode of worship. Tibet is renowned as a great centre of tantrism. Tārā, one of the daśamahāvidyās is worshipped by Buddhists. The tantric path has also given rise to innumerable Goddesses. Among them, there are ten chief deities who signify ten distinct paths of worship. They are collectively called daśamahāvidyās–the great tenfold knowledge. They are *Kāli*, *Tārā*, *Tripurasundari*, *Bhuvaneśvari*, *tripurabhairavi*, *Chennamastā* *Dhūmāvati*, *Bagalamukhi*, *Mātangi* and *Kamalātmika*. Each of them has a special chakra and special modes of worship. Of these Chinnamasta is a fascinating deity. She is represented

as a headless trunk holding in one hand the severed head and in the other, a scissors. Blood gushes forth from the trunk in three streams sprouting like a red fountain. The severed head itself laps up the middle stream. The two attendants standing on either side drink the other two streams. The significance of this deity is explained by modern Tantric works,[8] as the representation of the interaction of prakāśa, the Light and Nāda, the sound during creation. The sudden precipitation of the lower triple world of Annam-physical, prāṇa-vital and manas-mental of creation from the higher triple world of Pṛthvī-earth, Antarikshm-mid-region and dyauḥ-heaven from the creator accounts for a sudden severance of the created from creator. The reaction of sound and light creates in the physical, thunder and lightning. Chinnamastā has also been described as shining like the lightning. (Vidyullekheva bhāsvarā). She is spoken of as the Śakti of Virochana (the primordial shining Light of Veda) with the thunder vajra as her weapon. The three blood streams represent the force currents of parachaṇḍachandī, varṇinī and Ḍākinī, within the suṣumnā, iḍā and pingalā nāḍis respectively. As Goddess herself is the power of suṣumnā, the middle stream is gulped up by the severed itself. The rest are consumed by the two attendants representing the powers of Iḍā and Pingalā. The Goddess has been identified with Reṇukā, the mother of Paraśurāma. Of the ten Goddesses, Kāli, Chinnamastā, Dhūmāvatī and Bagalamukhī represent power and force either active or dormant power. She can be identified with vedic rātri. Sundarī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Bhairavī and Kamalātmikā have the common features of Light, bliss and beauty. Tārā combines in her the features of Kāli and Sundarī. She resembles Bhairavī, Bagalamukhī and Mātangī with respect to sound, force expressed or deterred. This three-fold division recalls the vedic 'tisro devir mayobhuvaḥ' – three Goddesses, producers of delight. The Upanishads also mention the unborn red, white and dark–'ajām ekām lohita śukla kṛṣṇām'. The

8. 'The ten great cosmic powers' – S. Sankaranarayanan (1972) Dipti Publications, Pondicherry.

colours standing for Rajas, Sattva and Tamas. In Tantra also Kāli is dark, Tārā is white and Sundarī, red. Thus a gradual evolution can be traced and correlations can be found.

While the intellectuals grapple this with philosophic notions, the masses were developing their own particular Goddesses. Each village invariably has a shrine for Devi. Sometimes, the Goddess is simply called Ammā, Mother. Or else, she is given various local names. Sometimes instead of an elaborate shrine we even have just a Śakti, triśūla-trident thrust into the ground and worshipped. Some deities formerly belonging to higher rungs are pushed back and are recognised only by the masses. We have the instance of Jyeṣṭhā called Sēṭṭai in Tamil who has been mentioned in Vedas and has been considered as the elder sister of Lakshmī. She is also called Alakshmī and was propitiated formerly. She is identified with Dhūmavatī of tantric and Rātrī of Veda. She has been worshipped specially by some tantrics. Now she has been relegated to the ranks of a village deity. Piḍāri, now worshipped only by villagers is considered by some to be the corrupt form of Bhaṭṭarikā, the supreme mistress. We have names of Devi like Bhaṭṭārikā and Parabhaṭṭārikā. There have also been historic deities. Draupadī has been worshipped as Draupadi amman all over South India. Kaṇṇagi, the heroine of Silappadikāram has been deified at the instance of the Chera King Chenguṭṭuvan. All over India, various Sati mātās, wives who burnt themselves in the funeral pyres of their husbands have been worshipped. There are also special deities for hunters and similar tribes. The Āryāstava of Harivamśa mentions Aparṇā, Nagnaśabarī and Parṇaśabarī. She has been Goddess of Sabaras, Pulindas and Barbaras. This deity might be a representative of non-aryan trends.

The conception of the fierce aspect of the mother Goddess has its counterparts in the cultures of Babylon and Egypt. Several similar features have been traced between Kāli, the Babylonian Goddess Anat and the Egyptian Goddess Hathor-Sekhmet. Anat as described in the new Ugaritic text-may

belong to the middle of second millenium B. C.-has several similar attributes like drinking blood, wearing a necklace of heads and a girdle of hands. Both engage in wild slaughter and enjoy drinking of their victim's blood.[9] Yogamāyā or Viṣṇumāyā has been referred in Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 1280 (Ed. Grenfell and Hunt Part 11 pp 190-220) dated 3rd Century A. D. This portion is an invocation to Isis. Herein she is equated with all mother Goddesses of the Greeks. Cybele, Atargatis, Astarte, Nanaia and others. In line 103 is included Maia (Maya) in India. According to Johnston, she can be identified with Buddhist Māyā.

The Śakti eult should not be deemed to be the exclusive possession of the Śaivism. It is an all embracing vast cult and Vaishṇavism also adopts the Śakti cult. In the Pāncharātrāgama and Vishṇupurāṇa specially the glory of Lakshmi who intervenes on behalf of the aspirant who has surrendered is fully expatiated. The Śrī sūkta of the four vedas also speak of Lakshmi's glory. In *Bhāgavata* it is said that Krishṇa was able to accomplish all his feats, līlās only with the aid of Yogamāya.[10]

The Buddhists have threefold tantric mode of worship as Priya, yoga and Charya. They have also the divisions of Vajrayāna, Sahajayāna and Kālachakrayāna. In a Buddhistic tantric text called Sādhanamālā, Goddesses like Mahāsarasvatī, Vajravīṇa-Sarasvatī, Vajra Śarada and Ārya Sarasvatī are mentioned. The Buddhists also have Marichi devī also worshipped as Usha. They offer special worship to Tara. Thus we see the prominence of Śakti cult in Buddhism also. The Jains have three-fold Acharas of Bāhyacāra, Kulacāra and Samayacāra. They have Goddesses like Chakreśvarī, Vajreśvarī, Ajita, Duritari, Kalikā, Vairoti and Sarasvatī. They also worship by Sri Vidya mode. Padmavati devi of the Jains has

9. Marwin Pope – 'Goddess Anat and Kali'. Summaries of papers of the International Congress of Orientalists, New Delhi (1964) pp 15-16.

10. Vide Bhāgavata 10-29-11. Bhagavān api tā rātrīh śaradutphulla mallikā/ Vikshya rantum manascakre, Yogamāyām upāśritaḥ//

manifold forms as many as fourteen! They are *Raktapadmāvati, Śaivāgamokta Padmāvati, Hamsa-Padmāvati, Sarasvati Padmāvati, Savari Padmāvati, Kāmeśvari-Padmāvati, Bhairavipadmāvati, Tripurpadmāvati, Nityapadmāvati, Mahāmohini padmāvati, Putrakara padmāvati, Kajjalavatāra Padmāvati, Ghaṭavatāra Padmāvati and Dipavatāra Padmāvati.* For this reason of having so many Goddesses the Jains have been derided as 'Antaḥ śaktaḥ bahir jainaḥ' - Jainas outside, but really Śāktas in their hearts.

Hence we see that the Śakti cult or the worship of Mother Goddess is universal and eternal. We see this trend in all civilizations of all regions during all the centuries. Whether worshipped as a village deity, or a barbaric Goddess or a great tantric deity, she has been affording solace equally to all categories of worshippers. The genesis of the Śakti cult in India goes back to the hoary past. It is originated in the prehistoric deities of Harappan periods, it took definite form and philosophic import during the Vedic period and acquired a tangle of doctrines, rituals and practices during the classical period. The tantric mode had lent a special distinction to this Śakti cult and it has evolved into a complex system. Even today, Śakti cult still draws countless worshippers to its manifold vistas.

THE BRAHMOTSAVA FESTIVAL

BY

THIRU. M. ARUNACHALAM

INTRODUCTION

Festivals are fountains of joy for all. They exist in all countries, in all levels of society, in all races, and had been existing through all the ages. If man has been described as a social animal, festivals are the occasions for a close joyous coming together for the members of the social group, and they give full expression to the social instinct.

Festivals seem to be universal. They have been natural to man at all climes, in the past and in the present. The expression of the greatest joy and the occasion therefor is called a festival.

The Tamil word for festival is *Vilā* (vilavu); this arises from the root, *vilai,* to desire and to love; the noun means the thing desired, the object celebrated. So when the narrow love expands, it expresses itself in the form of festivals and celebrations. The Sanskrit word *is, utsava* (festival, jubilee) which is derived from a root sū meaning to rise upwards; so this is going upward, getting elevated. In the English language also the two words *feast* (joyful religious anniversary) and *festival* (celebration) are very much the same. All these have the general connotation of the celebration. *Viḷā* is called also *koṇḍāṭṭam,* which word has the additional element of dance in it.

Temple festivals form a substantial part of our festivities. Many of our festivals are celebrated both in the home and in the temple. The annual Brahmötsavas of every temple are temple rituals or celebrations which call for the greatest involvement of the community.

The entire community of men, women and children is eagerly looking forward to the festival for the joy and the feast to the eyes and the ears which it would give and which would well be the talk of community till the next similar festival comes up. Procession and decorations keep alive the community's sense of art and their capacity to appreciate beauty.

UTSAVA

Utsava is of three categories, *nitya. naimittika* and *kāmya.* Done at the conclusion of each day's *pūja* is the *Nityōtsava.* That done on particular *tithi, nakṣatra* etc., on *sankrānti* and similar occasions, is *naimittika. Kāmyōtsava* is done at a time which is pleasing to the performer and for a purpose useful to him.

Parimelaḷahar, the commentator of *Tirukkuraḷ* says *naimittika utsavas* are performed to make good for any defects in the *nityotsava* or *nitya pūjā (Kuraḷ* 18*).*

Though these are of three classes, the classes are mentioned differently in different āgamas. *Aruṇāchalotsava paddhati* speaks of daily, monthly and annual fēstivals. *Kumāratantram* mentions monthly, fortnightly and mahotsavas. Generally these are weekly, fortnightly and monthly. Special merits are attributed to each of these three classes.

Everything about the temple and the temple festivals is symbolic. The Śivaliṅga, the *Ṛṣabha* and the *Balipitha* are in a line and almost on the same level. This has a significance. Śivalinga is *Pati,* the *Ṛṣabha* is *paśu* and the *balipīṭha* is considered the *pāśa.* The fact that they are in a line denotes that the three are eternal, without beginning and without end.

Again, everything is symbolic regarding the Flag also. There are four parts here; the flag post, the flag string, the flag and the *darbha* rope. The flag post represents *Pati,* the string denotes His Śakti (or Grace); the *Ṛṣabha* emblem on the flag the *paśu* and the *darbha* rope the *pāśa.* Āgama like

the *Kāraṇa* say so. *Ṛṣabha* is also the *Dharma devatā*. The reason for choosing the Ṛṣabha mount is given in Tiruvācakam:

கடகரியும் பரிமாவும் தேரும் உகந்து ஏருதே
இடம் உகந்து ஏறியவாறு எனக்கறிய இயம் பேடி
தடமதில்கள் அவை மூன்றும் தழலெரித்த அந்நாளில்
இடபமதாய்த் தாங்கினை திருமால்காண் சாழலோ.

The *Bimbāgama* gives in essence the purpose of daily *utsava* in the Śiva temples in its own way.

First day festival: Removal of gross matter.

Second day: Removal of both the gross and the subtle matter.

Third day: Removal of the three *viṉai (Karma, prārabdha, sañcita* and *āgāmya*. three *buddhis*. three *guṇas*, three fragrances, three blemishes (lust, anger and delusion), three births *(naraka, manushya* and *deva)*, three attachments (property, gold and woman).

Fourth day: Removal of the four *karaṇas*, the four categories of births (those that crawl, fly, walk and live in water).

Fifth day: Removal of the five senses, five *avasthās* and the *pañcamalas*.

Sixth day: Removal of the six faults like *kāma*, *krodha* etc, the six tattvas from *kāla*, the six characteristics of *viṉai*, the six *pada-mukti*.

Seventh day: Removal of the seven births, the seven *vidyā tattvas*-the characteristics of the *māyā mala*.

Eighth day: The illumination of the eight attributes.

Ninth day: Indication of the negation of the three forms, three functions and binding in the three places,

Tenth day : Immersion in Eternal Bliss. The *Astradeva* in the place of Somāskandamūrti is taken out in procession during the day (forenoon) and Somāskanda mūrti during the night (sometimes the whole night) on different mounts each day.

The *Hṛdaya* (heart) is often termed the *puṇḍarika* (lotus) where the Lord dwells. In this concept, the heart as the seat of the Lord is Chidambaram: because He dances there causing the heart beat. The moment the Lord stops His dance, every thing ceases to exist; there is total dissolution. Man is alive only as long as the heart beats; the moment the beating stops, he is dead.

In this concept other sacred shrines are also placed on the organs of the human being; the head is the Śrī Parvata (Mallikārjunam in the Andhra Pradesh); Tiru Kedāram is on the forehead; Kāśi (Banaras) where Śiva is enshrined as the pure form of *jñana* is here stationed at the *lalāṭa*) (mid way between the the eye brows and at the root of the beginning of the nostrils); Kurukshetra is the *kriyā*, the heart is Prayāg; and the centre of the heart is Chidambaram.

In like manner, certain other virtues are traditionally attached to certain shrines. Birth in Tiru Ārūr confers *mukti*, death in Kāśi confers *mukti*. (Because of this faith, a good number of people in Tamilnadu make the necessary legal settlements of their property, go and live in Kasi awaiting their death.) A *darsan* at Chidambaram confers *mukti*. The greatest of all, mere thinking of Tiru Annamalai confers *mukti*.

St. Appar specially mentions five services to the Śiva temple sweeping Śivālaya, applying cowdung or water to the mud floor (in the ancient days), preparing and offering floral wreaths, lighting lamps and singing sweet music one superior to the other in point of merit;

விளக்கினால் பெற்ற இன்பம் மெழுக்கினாற் பதிற்றி யாகும்
துளக்கில் நன்மலர் தொடுத்தால் தூயவிண் ஏறலாகும்
விளக்கிட்டார் பேறு சொல்லில் மெய்ந்நெறி ஞானமாகும்
அளப்பில கீதம் சொன்னார்க் கடிகள்தாம் அருளுமாறே,

" The merits accruing fron pasting thc floor will be ten times that of sweeping. Those that prepare floral wreaths will rise into the heavens. Those that light lamps will realise the True Knowledge. How shall we measure the merits accruing to those that sing many sweet hymns with music?"

BRAHMOTSAVA

Brahmotsava is the most important annual event in any temple, Śiva or Vishṇu. Usually in all major temples it is planned in a manner that the concluding day ie. the car festival day (tenth day) occurs on the *Paṅguni* (March-April) *Uttiram* day.

There are more than 500 temples sanctified by the songs and verses of the Śaiva Nāyanmar and 108 Vishṇu temples by the Āḻvār. Naturally these temples had enjoyed greater sanctity and popularity than the other temples, in the course of the last 1500 years. A few temples of some minor deities (such as Māriamman temple at Samayapuram) have also achieved great popularity.

Some major temples have the festival on different occasions and even more than once. For example, the festival in the Naṭarāja temple of Chidambaram takes place in connection with the *Ārdrā Darśanam* in the month of *Mārhaḷi* and with the *Āni Tirumañjanam* in *Āni*. So also in Śrī Raṅgam, Tiruppati, Madurai and other places. On all the days of the ten day festival, the chief deity is taken round the main streets, called *māḍa vīdhi* or car streets (the streets along which the temple car is drawn on the ninth day of the festival) at night time, brightly illuminated with lamps and accompanied by the *nāgasvaram* orchestra and the singing of the Vedas and the *Devāram* or *Nālāyiram* songs as the case may be.

In each shrine, the *brahmotsava* or the ten day festival is said to have been inaugurated by a celestial being in the remote past - such as Hiraṇya varmā in Chidambaram, Brahmā in Tiruppati, Musukunda Chakravartti in Tiru Ārūr etc. It is history that Rājarāja Chola constructed the Big temple of

Tañjāvūr and organized an annual festival there of over thirty days.

Brahmotsava is the *Mahotsava* for the temple. *Mahā* is large, *ut*-great, *sava*-functions beginning from creation (sṛṣṭi), the five functions. Hence the Brahmotsava represents the five cosmic functions.

The importance of the *utsavas* is emphasized by Sēkkiḷār in his famous verses placed in the mouth of Tiru Jñanasambandhar when he asked the ashes to yield forth the full form of Pūmpāvai at Mylapore. Here he says:

"The great purpose of those born on the earth are two: one, feeding of the bhaktas of Śiva who sports the crescent moon on His locks, and two, the enjoyment arising from witnessing the glory of the fine festivals of the Lord; if these are true, then may Pūmpāvai come forth before all the world to see."

மண்ணினிற் பிறந்தார் பெறும்பயன், மதிசூடும்
அண்ணலார் அடியார்தமை அமுதுசெய் வித்தல்,
கண்ணினால் அவர் நல்விழாப் பொலிவுகண்டார்தல்
உண்மையாம் எனின் உலகர்முன் வருகென உரைப்பார்,

Āgamas vary in the number of days of duration of the festivals: these are from one day, ten days, twelve days and twenty one days. Twentyone day festival is celebrated in the Śrī Raṅgam temple, where it is called the Night-ten and the Day-ten and it is fully devoted to the recitation of the Four Thousand *Divyaprabandha* hymns in the Presence of Lord Ranganātha. But generally the number of days is ten.

PRELIMINARIES

There are a few preliminary rituals to be gone through before the first day's festival is begun. These will be briefly mentioned below.

Vināyaka Pūjā:

The annual temple festival naturally commences with a Vināyaka *pūjā*. Usually there is a *pūjā* called *anujñai* for

every Śaiva ritual in the home or in the temple. This is generally to take permission from Him for performing the concerned ritual. A pūjā to Him is ordained in respect of every ritual; the story of *Tiripura samhāra* is well known.

The legend is that the Supreme Lord Śiva went out for the *Tiripura saṁhāra* without an invocation to Vināyaka. The axle of the chariot broke. When such was the case even with Śiva, we need not mention the state of the mortals who might proceed to do any ritual without invoking Vināyaka who is also called Vighneśvara the remover of all obstacles.

Vināyaka is invoked on an ornamented pedestal on a pinch of sandal, turmeric, sand or even cow dung. Pūjā is performed with coconut and food offerings in the shape of fruits etc. Aṛuhu (hariali grass) is his favourite, serving as flower. If the coconut breaks into two halves with uniform edges, it augurs well. If it does not break evenly, it is not auspicious. An *aghora japa* is performed by the Śivachārya to overcome this defect. The coconut chosen should neither be too tender nor fully dried (like copra). Coconut and *modaka naivedya* are particularly pleasing to Vināyaka. He is of *Praṇava* form and *Praṇava* is the origin for *sṛṣṭi*.

Incense signifies the attainment of happiness, lamp enlightenment of the intellect or consciousness, and camphor effacement of the ego, even as camphor burns itself out leaving no remainder or residue.

Mṛt-Sangrahaṇam :

Gathering of earth (mud) from a clean spot, an ant hill, near holy tanks, a flower gārden, sea coast, under the sacrificial tree (*peepal*) etc. is prescribed (mṛt-earth, Sangrahaṇa-gathering). Earth should not be taken from the *nirṛti* (southeast), east and south directions. The earth should be worshipped in a human form and the mud is taken from that form's abdomen area and not from any other part. For these purposes the *Astradeva* is taken out in procession with temple music.

A Vināyaka pūjā is done at the site and permission of Bhūdevi for taking the earth is obtained by a pūjā to her. The *arcaka* faces east or north applies the spade thrice, takes some earth, places it in the appropriate vessel cover it and returns to the temple in a clockwise direction, with the usual temple music. This earth is wetted and seeds sown in the next ritual, aṅkurārpaṇa, to test whether the cereals sprout in it.

Aṅkurārpaṇam :

This is to be done during the evening or the first quarter of the night. This consists of wetting the *navadhānyas* and allowing them to germinate. (*Nava dhānyas* are the nine grains or cereals - wheat, paddy, dhal, green gram, bengal gram, bean, sesame, black gram and horse gram.) This is done either for nine, seven, five, three days or one day earlier or even immediately on the same day.

Ankurārpaṇam is done on the place of worship in one of the four directions - north, northeast, southwest or northwest. *Ankuram* is the sprout; ankurārpaṇam is intended to see whether the cereal seeds germinate in the moist earth. If they germinate and sprout giving out pale or pinkish sprouts it augurs well; it is considered to signify that the work taken on hand namely, the *utsava, kumbhābhiṣeka* or similar such activity will come off well. Otherwise, if the seeds turn black or do not sprout, it is not propitious. A *śānti homa* is then conducted and the work of *utsava* etc, is then proceeded with.

The cereals are cleaned, worshipped with mantras, to make them of Siva form, and placed in cow's milk which is conceived of as Śiva śakti. Then the moist earth which had been gathered earlier is distributed in twelve small cups (usually of burnt clay). The cups are placed in a square with the *kumbha* in the middle. Candra is worshipped in the *kumbha* and Sūrya in the cups, the cereals are placed in the cups and the *candra kumbha* water is poured into them. A divinity is held

to express itself in the sprouts, where the cereals and milk are the Śiva śakti, and Sūrya and Candra are the *jñāna śakti* and *krīyā śakti*.

Making the navadhānya sprout is symbolic of coming into life or creation.

Rakshā Bandhanam :

Tying a string for the removal of all sins. This is done best by invocation on the *kumbha* and with *homa*. This is performed in order that the festival is completed unhindered without any impediments. Just as the mother takes in the medicine to cure the baby's ailment, we perform the *rakshā bandhanam* on to God Himself in order to cure the disease of births in the souls that are His children. At the end of the festivals, the *rakshā* string is untied and offered in the *abhaya hasta* of the Lord.

It is called *kāppu* in Tamil. It consists of tying a piece of string in order to ward off all impediments. It is tied with the *Tryambaka mantra*, after a pūjā of the three classes of *Tattvas (ātma, vidyā* and *Śiva tattvas)*; for men it is tied at the wrist on the right hand (and for women on the left hand). All of us are familiar with this *rakshā(kāppu* or *kaṅgaṇam)* tied at the time of the wedding ceremony.

Bheri Tāḍanam :

After worship of Rudra etc,, the achārya strikes the drum thrice. The first stroke signifies good for humans etc. dwelling in the three worlds and destruction of the evil forces, the second good for the sages and gods, and the third good for all beings and other animals.

Yāga :

On all the days of the brahmotsava, a *yāga* is performed in the *yāgaśālā*. This is symbolic of the function of preservation *(sthiti)*,

Yāgaśālā is of the form of the six *adhvās*. The whole of the yīgaśālā is the *Śāntyatīta kalā*, The four entrances stand

for the other four kalās-*śānti, vidyā, pratisṭhā* and *nivṛtti*. The centre of the *yāgamaṇḍapa* is the *varṇādhvā*, the 51 *akṣaras* (letters). The *kumbhas* represent the 11 *mantras-astra, kavaca,* śikhā, *śiras, netra* and *hṛdaya* – the *ṣaḍaṅga mantras;* and Īśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Aghora, Vāmadeva and Sadyojāta-the *Pancabrahma mantras). Homa* materials represent the 36 *tattvas* (ātmatattva 24, vidyā tattva 7, and śuddha tattva 5). The place of the maṇḍapa – the 124 *bhuvanādhvās,*

The Śaiva can worship (in the temple) Śiva, only in the three places-*stambha, bimba* and *kumbha* (namely the Śivalinga, the metal icons or images. and the kumbha or pot of water). In the yāga, Śiva is invoked on a pot of water and worshipped. The pot may be of gold or silver or copper and even be of mud (burnt clay) which is called the *svarṇa* (golden) *pātra*. The pot is held to represent the physical form of the deity. The Yogaja āgama gives the representation as follows: *Kumbha:* the pot represents flesh, water is blood, string wound round the pot is the 72000 *nāḍis*. Gems placed in it the bones, vastra wound round the pot the skin, *kūrca* is the *kośa,* mango leaves *jaṭai* (matted locks), pomegranate the teeth, coconut the head. Mantra chanted is the *Prāṇa*. Gems and *svarṇa puṣpam* placed inside are said to be *śukla* by *Siddhānta sārāvalī*.

Similarly the *pañcāsanas* and the concept of the lotus are associated with paddy, rice, green gram, black gram and sesame.

Āhuti in the *Śivāgni* of the yāgaśālai is a symbol of the purification–three forms-ghee, puffed rice *(pori)* and food offerings. *Lājapuṣpam:* Puffed rice *(pori)* symbolises the unification of the *mala*-free souls with Śiva, effected by the *ācārya*.

VĀSTU ŚĀNTI

This ritual of *Vāstu śānti* is preceded by a *grāma śānti homa*. This is intended to secure in general the peace of the village during the ten days of the brahmotsava. Then follows Vāstu śānti.

The story of Vāstu:

Out of the anger of Śiva in the Antakāsura fight, a drop of perspiration fell from Śiva on the earth. Because of this anger, a monster arose therefrom. Under Śiva's order, it drank up the blood of Antaka which fell on the earth and, pleased with the blood, did a great penance for Śiva. Śiva was pleased and granted it many boons. The monster *asura* by virtue of these boons harassed men and celestials. They prayed to Śrikaṇṭha Parameśvara. He created Atibala Rudra and eight nooses. Rudra tied him up with the tight ropes or nooses and felled him prostrate on the earth; Rudra made all the devas like Brahmā sit on him. This is the *Vāstupuruṣa.* (Since the monster rose up from *Śiva's* perspiration, he could not die.) He sleeps for the period of one Brahmā's day. His head is at Īśāna, feet at Nirṛti, *añjali* at the chest, face downwards, a form of great anger. Head is at the east from *Kanni* for three months, then south for threee months from *Dhanus,* then west for three months from *Mīnam* and lastly north for the remaining three months. This is the *cala vāstu deva* (moving) while the former is the *sthira* (unmoving or fixed) *vāstu deva.* He has upturned face at time of worship and downward face on other occasions.

Another Story:

Śukra created Ajamukhāsura for conquering the devas. To help the devas, Śiva emitted sparks from His forehead, central eye. However, pleased with the surrender of Śukra, Śiva named Ajamukha as Vāstu puruṣa and ordered his worship at the time of house construction; ordered also fixing of the devas on his prostrate body.

Vāstu is described as *pāparūpa* (of the form of sin). He is also called *Vāstu-brahma* and *Surāṭ, Virāṭ puruṣa.* As he had been made the *ati devatā* for buildings, his appeasement seems to be called for in the form of pūjā. This is called *Vāstu-śānti.* This ritual is intended to get over whatever defects may be there in the earth, land or soil chosen. Vāstu is also the devatā for the *pūjā maṇḍapa*; hence his

propitiation. He is worshipped in the fire. After *āhutis* are made to him in the from of ghee, food offerings and pori (puffed rice), Śiva is worshipped in the fire (homāgni). The form of Vāstu is created out of *darbha* grass and *palāsa (urasu-Tamil* in common parlance, *butea frondosa)* leaves. (In the modern day, because these cannot be easily obtained, hay and coconut leaves are substituted, with a few *darbha* blades.) The *homāgni* is applied to this combustible form and the burning form is drawn round all the places to be purified- round the yāgaśālā and round the temple *prākāras*. The water in the kumbha is then sprinkled after the form. This is Vāstu-śānti.

The aim of the Vāstu śānti is the removal of any faults in the land chosen. Vāstu brahma is the atidevatā for the maṇḍapa and so this *śānti* is performed to propitiate him.

TIRU ULĀ

On all the days of the festival of ten (or eleven) days there is a *Tiru Ulā*, procession of the Deity mounted on the appropriate mounts, along the four main streets around the temple. This *ulā* signifies the bestowal of grace on the three worlds. The Lord now takes into consideration those that could not come into the temple and worship, those that have been denied temple entry by tradition and by caste (of course unjustly), old and sick people, and women in the state of advanced pregnancy. These classes of people could also be full of devotion. The Lord recognizes their devotion, goes to them at their own places and gives them darśan.

THE FIRST DAY - DHVAJĀROHANAM

The dhvaja stambha denotes Pati (Śi), the string Parai (va), ṛṣabha inscribed on the flag cloth the soul (ya), the cloth itself tirodha mala (na) and the darbha string mala (ma).

அஞ்செழுத்தும் எட்டெழுத்தும் ஆறெழுத்தும் நாலெழுத்தும்
பிஞ்செழுத்தும் மேலைப் பெருவெழுத்தும் நெஞ்சமுத்தில்
பேசும் எழுத்துடனே பேசா எழுத்தினையும்
கூசாமற் காட்டக் கொடி,

"The letters of mystic import, counted as five, eight, six and four - I establish these and va and si firmly in my heart and am now hoisting this flag to illumine the Silent letter (Si) along with the audible letter (va), (The various letters mentioned are different forms of the Śiva *pañcākṣara* with or without the *Praṇava* and the other *bija mantras*. *Si* is Śiva and *Va* is His grace.)

The significance of the *dhvajārohaṇa* festival is to redeem the souls, that are immersed in the three malas and caught in the cycle of births and deaths, from this state through the proper *dīkṣā*, remove the *malas* and to make them reach Śiva. *Dhvajārohaṇa* is always performed in the forenoon. Attention is paid to the position of the people participating in this function. The *ācārya* is placed at the right, the temple officer, *kartā* or *yajamān*, to the left, *bhaktas* behind, *ōduvār* chanting the songs and servants doing service in front.

There is a legend of Chidambaram Naṭarāja temple regarding the hoisting of the flag. In the days of Saint Umāpati Śivācārya, one of the Dīkṣitars (c. 1275-1325) privileged to perform the pūjā of Naṭarāja, the temple flag would not rise up at the time of the annual festival. Umāpati came on the scene and sang four verses on the flag hoisting emphasising the significance of the ritual and immediately the flag went up. The four verses are known as *Koḍik-kavi* and constitute poem 11 of the 14 Siddhānta Śāstras. The verse quoted is the last in the poem. The first day's festival is of course *dhvajārohaṇa* the worship of the *ṛṣabha* (bull) figure on a piece of cloth, tied to a string as a flag and hoisted atop a pole called the *Dhvajastambha*. The phrase *dhvajārohaṇa (koḍi-yētram* in Tamil*)* has become proverbial for denoting the commencement of any activity. The *stambha* is a permanent stout post made of very strong wood, mostly covered with a copper plate. The flag is hoisted on the first day on the top of the flag post. Chants in Śanskrit from the Vedas and the Tamil hymns are sung. The *pali* indicates that all lives originate from Him. This is the *Sṛṣṭi krama* festival. The 36 *tattvas* and 60 tāttvikas

(derivatives from the *tattvas*) arise from the earth. This festival is a symbolic act meant to rid the soul of the *sthūla* (gross) body. Śiva is the Supreme physician.

மந்திரமும் தந்திரமும் மருந்துமாகித்
தீரா நோய் தீர்த்தருள வல்லான் —*St. Appar*
மருள்உலாம் மலங்கள் தீர்க்கும்
மருந்திவை வயித்ய நாதன். —*Siddhiyār 123*

In order to enable us to experience and expend our *karma*, He gives us the two bodies (*sthūla* and *sūkşma*) as a medicine for karma; the cycle is ended, the impurities are removed, ignorance is dispelled, the illumination of *Śivajñāna* dawns, resulting in ultimate *Sivānanda* (bliss). On this day Śiva gives a *darśan* under the *sthala vŗksha*: this is symbolic of Cosmic creation.

THE SECOND DAY

Usually Śiva is taken round on all the days along the *māḍa vidhi* (main streets, also called car streets) in the day and in the night. On the second day He mounts the Sūrya prabhā during the day and the Candra prabhā during the night and this symbolizes the function of preservation. This also means that He is present in the two Sūrya and Candra, the sun and the moon, and in the intermediate state of *Jñāna- agni*, bestowing heat and light and equally cold and darkness on all the universe.

The subtle body is responsible for the gross body. The body is formed of the eight *tattvas* - the five *tanmātras, manas, buddhi* and *ahańkāram.* Śiva in His mercy is considered to bestow the *sūkşma* body on the soul, which was in the *kevala* state so far, in order that its consciousness may now begin to awaken and function. The significance is that the soul should realize that it is different from the two bodies, *sthūla* and sūkşma, and that it should get rid of all attachment to the body.

THE THIRD DAY

On this day Śiva comes out mounted on *Adhikāra Nandi* in the day and the *Bhūta Vāhana* in the night. Nandi belongs

to the category of *Vijñāna-kalas* who have shed the two *malas, māyā* and *karma* and have only āṇava mala. They have attained the *Śiva sārūpya* stage bearing four shoulders, four arms, and having three eyes and the blue throat, and holding the deer and the axe etc., on the hands, just like Śiva. They are the keepers at the entrance to Śiva's hall in Kailāsa. The *bhūtagaṇa* have the duty of taking to Kailāsa the select souls that have earned the right of entry there by their devoted *bhakti* and service in this birth. This represents the function of dissolution.

The distinction between this *Nandi* and the *Ṛṣabha* should be clearly understood. Ṛṣabha is just the bull-mount placed in front of Śiva in every *āvaraṇa,* between Śiva and the *bali pīṭha.* He has the bull face. But Nandi has the deva countenance (human) and is installed at the entrance *gopura* on the inside facing north in very big temples. It has become usual to refer to the Bull-mount Ṛṣabha as Nandi but this is wrong.

The third day's festival is calculated to dispel all blemishes that are in threes: for example the three categories of *karma-sañcitam, prārabdham* and *āgāmyam*; the three blemishes of the intellect-doubt, perverted understanding and error: the three *guṇas tāmasa, rājasa* and *sāttvika*; the three mental states-*cittam, buddhi* and *ahaṁkāra* which are the *antaḥ-karaṇa*: the three faults-desire, anger and delusion; three births-the past, the present and the future; the three attachments (*Īṣaṇa trayam*)-earth, woman and gold.

Here *Nivṛtti kalā* which is an aspect of *Kriyā śakti,* releases the souls from these three attachments. Pratiṣṭhā kalā which is an aspect of *Jñāna śakti,* fixes the souls in this released state and deters them from going back to the attachments. *Vidyā kalā* is an aspect of *Icchā śakti* and it causes the souls to have *Śivānubhūti,* transcending *anubhava-jñāna* and *āgama-jñāna.*

THE FOURTH DAY

The mount prescribed is the puruṣāmṛga during the day and the five hooded serpent during the night. This is performed for the dissolution of the four *antaḥ-karaṇas, manam, buddhi, cittam* and *ahaṁkāram*. These are so called because they are the inner instruments and are not manifest outside (antaḥ-inside). But compared to the *kalādi tattvas*, these are external; and so are called external antaḥ-karaṇas, while the *kalādi* (removed on the seventh day's festival) are termed the internal *antaḥ-karaṇas*.

An ingenious explanation is offered for the serpent mount. This day's festival is symbolic of the fourth function, obscuration. The *nāga* lives in the ant hill underground in concealment; besides it conceals its hood, its poison and the fabulous nāgaratnam, all of which it brings out at will and withdraws at will. Hence the appropriateness of the serpent for this day which itself stands for obscuration.

In most places Śiva appears during the day on a palanquin which is ornamented with beads and flowers. It has besides curtains on both the open sides. This is also said to symbolize the function of obscuration. *Kuṇḍalinī śakti* is of the serpent form and hence also the appropriateness. Its evolution and involution are creation and dissolution of the manifest universe; Śiva has it as his *Parigraha śakti*.

THE FIFTH DAY - SAPPARAM

On this day Śiva appears on the *prabhā* during the morning and on the *ṛṣabha* in the night. The *prabhā* is of circular form, *liṅgākāra* (form of Linga) in the sanctum. Besides this is considered to signify His pervasiveness in the *pātāḷa* world, seventh from *atala*, the seven higher worlds beginning from this earth, the sūrya, chandra and rākṣasa maṇḍalas and in all created beings, helping them to exist, Himself just being all-pervasive, inside and out, and being as the Para-Brahma illumining everything with an eternal bliss.

It may be remembered that this day's festival symbolizes *anugraha* or Grace, the fifth function.

The night function when Śiva rides His usual bull-mount has also a special significance. The very form of Śiva on the snow-white ṛṣabha has the meaning of *anugraha*.

Ṛṣabhārūḍhar is one of the 25 Śivamūrtas or manifest forms. It may be recalled that for the *praḷayākalar*, the second class of souls who had rid themselves of *māyā* but are yet bound by the other two bonds (*malas*) *karma* and āṇava, Śiva appears on the heavens in the form of the Ṛṣhbhārūḍhar; this is mentioned in many instances in the stories of *Periya purāṇam*. The Ṛṣabha has removed the āṇava mala and is the symbol of jñāna obtained through Grace. When Śiva goes out to bestow His Grace on any one, He goes out on the bull mount and hence the significance of the bull in the concept of *anugraha*. Besides. the Ṛṣabha mount is the form of the Dharma devatā, which is pure white in colour; Viṣṇu took this form and carried Śiva, when His chariot broke on the occasion of His commencing to fight the Tripura asuras.

The four legs of the Bull are likened to the four antaḥ-karaṇas. They are now symbolically dissolved in pāśarūpam which is also called *Śakti jñāna*. Śiva transcends all this and shines as the Supreme Jñāna.

The four legs also symbolize the four attributes of the soul (the *ātma guṇas*)-*śamam* (equanimity with reference to good and bad experiences), *vicāra* (enquiry), santoṣa (joy) and sangha (company of the enlightened).

In continuation of the numbers stressed upon the previous days, this day's utsava has relevance to the number five. The festival is said to be conducted for the removal of the five senses, the five *avasthās jāgram, svapnam, suṣupti, turiyam* and *turiyātītam* and the *pañca malas*. So long as the ātmā has its perception through only the *indriyas*, it is

only sense bound. It has to shake off this knowledge, which is *jaḍa* and *asat*. Realising that these are not real but are only products of *māyā*, the ātmā is now on the path towards true Knowledge and through that towards Grace. Avasthā is the seat of the soul. It is of five categories: jāgrat the waking state, at the lalāṭa *sthāna; svapna* the dream state in the kaṇṭha sthāna; *suṣupti*, the sleep state, at the hṛdaya sthāna: *turiyam* the fourth deep sleep state at the *nābhi* (navel) sthāna: and lastly the final state the *turiyātita* state at the *mūlādhāra sthāna*, where the soul is united only with the *puruṣa tattva;* these *avasthās* give the soul rest. This *avasthā* is downward movement. All these are experienced in the yōga practices. The festival symbolically refers to these.

Then the festival also refers to the removal of the five *malas-āṇavam, karma, māyā, māyeyam* and *tirodhāna*. Māyeyam is the product of māyā kāraṇa, such as the *tanu, karaṇa, bhuvana* and *bhōga*. *Tirōdhāyi* is a Śiva śakti which does the function of obscuring the intelligence of the soul in order that it may seek the fruits of karma which alone can ultimately cause the removal of all malas.

THE SIXTH DAY

The earlier days' festivals 1–5 are the representation of the five functions in the evolutionary order (*sṛṣṭi krama*). The other festivals beginning from this day are held to be the same five functions in the dissolutionary order (*laya krama*). The sixth is the first day in this order signifying the *sṛṣṭi*. This festival is intended to remove the six inner vices (*kāma* etc.) the six *adhvās*, the six *guṇas* of karma mala and the six *pada mukti*. We shall briefly indicate what these are.

The six vices here mentioned are *kāma, krodha, lobha, moha, mada* and *mātsarya*. Kāma is the lust after wealth; krodha, is the vengeful spirit; lobha is not spending even the least part of one's earnings on acts of Śiva-puṇya; moha is craving for the things of the world; mada is arrogance born of riches; and mātsarya is jealousy at another's happiness.

The six adhvās are *mantra, pada, varṇa, tattva, bhuvana kalā*. Adhvā means the path; here it means the path by which *puṇya* and *pāpa* (merit and sin) accrue to the soul. The utterance of the mantras, the junction and separation of words (pada-word), the pronunciation of the letters (varṇa-letters), the manner in which the jñānendriyas, karmendriyas and the antaḥ-karaṇas function (ie. earn and enjoy matter), these being the tattvas, the worship or otherwise of the Bhuvanādhipas, and the worship or otherwise of the kalās represented by the five śaktis-*kriyā, jñāna, icchā*, Ādiśakti and Parāśakti-through all these six sources sin and virtue attach themselves to the individual.

Of the six *adhvās*, the *mantra, pada* and *varṇa adhvās* are of the *prapañca* of word; the other three-*bhuvanas, tattvas* and *kalās* are of the *prapañca* of the substance of words (*poruḷ*). These six adhvās are the paths through which the consciousness of the soul in the *kevala* state are illumined. Realising that the illumination or knowledge gained is only limited or material, the soul can dissolve the six respectively one with the other and thereby attain Śiva-*mantra* into *pada, pada* into *varṇa* and so on upto *kalā*. The *kalās* again are dissolved in the same manner. *Nivṛtti* in pratiṣṭhā upto *śāntyatitakalā* which is now dissolved in the Śiva śakti which is the sustenance for all the five kalās. Śiva śakti in turn gets dissolved in Śiva which signifies that Śiva through jñāna śakti removes the *mala* which is the cause of births.

The *karma mala guṇas* are defined as the six-attachment to the bodies taken, suffering there through ailments etc., performing further karma (*viṉai*), acts of omission of such noble duties as Śiva pūjā, giving, hōma, temple worship, Śivadhyāna etc., and commission of sinful acts like speaking ill of men of God and associating with those that speak ill. The lines from *Irupā-irupadu*, one of the Siddhānta śāstras written by St. Aruḷnandi Śivācārya may be quoted here;

இருத்தலும் கிடத்தலும் இருவினை இயற்றலும்
விடுத்தலும் பரந்தை மேவலான் றெடுத்த
அறுவகைக் குணனும் கருமத் தருளினை.

The sixth day festival is calculated to rid man of these six influences of *karma mala*.

Then this also signifies the removal of the six *pada-mukti*, associated with Brahmā and Viṣṇu; they are Brahma loka, Brahma sāmīpya, Brahma rūpa, Viṣṇu loka, Viṣṇu sāmīpya and Viṣṇu rūpa. The region of Brahmā and Viṣṇu are the areas of aśuddha māyā and they cannot naturally lift up the souls above their own state; they cannot help towards realization of Śiva.

The elephant mount on which Śiva appears in procession on the night of the sixth day has been given many symbolic associations. The elephant is symbolic of the parajñāna of Śiva. Its four tusks (a celestial elephant is considered in religious lore to possess four tusks as against the ordinary elephant which possesses only two tusks) are likened to the four vedas.

Its trunk is the suṣumnā nāḍi. Its three ruts (or *madas*) represent the aruḷ-śaktis – Haraṇi, Janani, and Rodhāyitri. Its great might and heroic deeds are like the cutting asunder of the *pāśa* enslaving the soul and suppressing all the base guṇas in the soul which direct him downward. Its *ambāri* (howdah) on the back denotes that the Jñāna śakti of God is manifest in the universe outwards in this manner. Its legs also have similar esoteric significance.

THE SEVENTH DAY – TIRUK – KALYĀṆAM

This is the festival symbolic of sthiti or preservation in the *laya krama*. Generally the *Tirukkalyāṇa Utsava* (wedding of Śakti and Śiva) is performed in the evening and this is a very attractive and popular festival in every temple which celebrates the ten day festival. The significance of Tirukkalyāṇam is that Śakti is now united with Śiva, the Absolute, who is without any attributes and without any action, in order that the universe begins to function. Without the union of Śakti-Grace with Śiva, Pure Intelligence or Consciousness, the universe stands still and the souls also are unable to function, i.e., perform their allotted *karma*, in order ultimately to reduce

their *karmā* to naught through experiencing, to befit themselves for the reception of Grace. The rituals of the kalyāṇam are modelled exactly on what is being done in human society but the function and the purpose are soul-oriented as indicated. This is merely symbolic of the higher purpose and it is meaningless to say it is just a wedding of Pārvatī and Parameśvara. Śivajñāna Siddhiyār the large Śaiva siddhānta śāstra would say that although they have brought forth the great universe, Śiva is the eternal Brahmacāri (bachelor) and Śakti is the eternal Kanni (Virgin). The *mantra* uttered at the time of the *tirumāngalya dhāraṇa* (jagat Jīvana hetunā) signifies that the ritual is for the purpose of enabling the universe exist and flourish.

In a large number of major temples, local legends (sthala purāṇam) would say that Śakti did a penance there in order to be united with Śiva and that, pleased with the penance, He appeared there and wedded Her. Mayilāppūr, Māyūram, Madurai, Kāñci, Kañjanūr, Pandaṇainallūr and a score of other shrines have such legends. In some of these places, Śakti the consort is not installed in front of the sanctum of the Śivalingam, facing south, but is placed either to the right or to the left, facing east, to give a physical representation to the penance in the legends. The world's Father and Mother (Jagataḥ pitarau) take this bhoga form in order that the created souls may become bhogis, enjoying the *tanu, karaṇa, bhuvana* and *bhoga* created for them.

After the wedding Śiva and Śakti are taken out in the usual procession on the Kailāsa vāhana. This depicts the story of Rāvaṇa trying to lift up Kailāsa the hill on which Śiva and Śakti abide because it obstructed his aerial movement. With the little toe of his foot Śiva crushed Rāvaṇa whose vanity was now suppressed. He prayed to Śiva and was admitted to His grace. This is symbolic of the ego of the soul which might think itself great without seeking God's grace. The moment the souls get over their ego (both ignorance and vanity) Śiva's grace is there ready to envelop

them in His mercy and lead them on to the enjoyment of bliss.

THE EIGHTH DAY - PARIVEṬṬAI

The eighth day's festival is the *Aśva vāhana*, horse-mount utsava. This symbolizes dissolution in the *laya krama* concept.

This is also said to symbolize the eight attributes of Śiva. These are sarvajñatva, tṛpti, anādibodham (eternal), svātantriya, alupta-śakti, anantaśakti, nirāmayātmā and viśuddhadeha.

These eight attributes are referred to as *eṇ.guṇattān tāḷ* in *Tiruk-Kuṟaḷ* and also by St. Appar. Śiva appears now in the natural or solitary state - discarding all his retinue. Hence the appropriateness of *tirobhava* or obscuration.

The eight day's festival is also known as *mṛga yātrā*, *samhāra yātrā* or *pariveṭṭai* (*pari*-horse). He sets out for His hunt - punishing the evil persons and uplifting the righteous ones. Many esoteric meanings are naturally assigned to the various aspects of this festival. The four puruṣārthas are the four legs of the horse. Jñāna and karma are its ears. *Para* and *Apara jñāna* are its eyes. Its face is the Supreme Law (Destiny or Fate). Its tail is the exceptions to the Codes. Āgamas are its external ornaments. The bridle is *praṇava.*

Śiva subdues or hunts away the three malas - āṇava like the boar, Karma like the deer and māyā like the bird.

THE NINTH DAY - BHIKṢĀṬANA

There is an elaborate legend associated with this festival and with the Bhikṣāṭana form of the Lord.

Some sages living in the Tārukāvana forest turned rank materialists advocating mere sacrifices and negating God, holding that the sacrifices alone would confer on them whatever illumination or bliss was needed. In order to teach them the lesson that without God penances and sacrifices were infructuous, Śiva took the Bhikṣāṭana form, a most bewitching male figure

with the begging bowl in His hand and went to the homes of the sages a-begging; the begging represented the casting away of the ego as alms into the begging bowl. He sent Viṣṇu in the form of Mohini, a bewitching female figure, to entice the sages from their penances and sacrifices. The sages abandoned their sacrifices and ran after Mohinī, while their counterparts, the women in the home, forgot their sense of chastity and strī-dharma and ran after the enticing form of the Bhikṣāṭana mūrti. The story goes on. All this was of course to teach the sages that mere karma leads humanity nowhere without the satisfying and uplifting refuge in a Godhead. God is the great bulwark for all *dharma* and without faith in god man becomes no better than an animal.

THE TENTH DAY - CAR FESTIVAL

This is the most important and glamorous festival. On the evening of the previous day or on the morning of this day, the main deity Śiva (usually as Sōmāskanda) is carried in *mañjam* and placed on the decorated car. There are five or three or less cars depending on the facilities and resources available in the temple. The car festival is for the Pañcamūrti. Śiva as Somāskanda, separate Śakti, Gaṇeśa, Subrahmaṇya with consorts, and Caṇḍeśa are the Pañcamūrti. Their cars are drawn along the main streets of the shrine (called car-streets). Of course Gaṇeśa's car is the first. The devotees assemble in large numbers and draw each car one by one with two stout ropes. The car festival, it goes without saying, is the biggest event in the village or town.

The Car Festival:

The car festival of Jagannāth at Puri in Orissa has achieved all-India fame. That is perhaps because Puri is the only important place in North India which has such a festival. It is conducted in the month of *Aṣāḍha* in the second lunar day (dvitiyai) of the bright fortnight. Three cars are said to be constructed afresh each year for Jagannāth (Viṣṇu), Subhadrā (sister) and Balarāma. They are as usual adorned

with flowers, festoons and flags and drawn by two thick ropes by the assembled *bhaktas*. The car festival itself is a festival of several days. In the olden days the Raja of Puri used to sweep the path of the car in front, indicating thereby the humility of the King and his patronage to the temple and the festival. People from all over India assemble in thousands often reaching a hundred thousand in strength.

The car festivals of Tamilnad are no less glamorous and important. We learn that the great King Kulottunga Chola II seated the Poet Sēkkiḻār (on his writing of the Periya Purāṇam) on the howdah of the royal elephant and took him along the streets of Chidambaram, himself fanning him with the *veṇcāmarai* in both hands. However in Tamilnad, every small village temple has a car festival, so much so that car festivals of great temples pass unnoticed. There is nothing to equal the grandeur of the great car festivals at Madurai, Chidambaram, Tiru Ārūr, Kanchipuram and many others.

Those that have visited north Indian temples would have noticed that the forms of the deities are not idealised forms but are only doll-like. This is not to minimise the great *bhakti* of the people. But here in Tamilnad the idealised forms are all great works of sculptural art and are symbolic of great truths of religion and philosophy. Viṣṇu as Jagannātha is of course an aspect of the Supreme Being but it is nearly two millennia since Subhadrā and Balarāma had been forgotten here. Here amidst us metaphysical and philosophical concepts are represented by the images and the festivals. The festival is for Śiva, in His varied manifest forms as Śakti, Vināyaka and Skanda. Every thing here is symbolic and because we have too much of this grand event in every small place, we do not realize its full grandeur and dimensions.

The car festival symbolizes in particular *anugraha* (conferment of Grace), the last of the five functions. Generally it also symbolizes the *Pañca kritya* Dance of Śiva (as Naṭarāja) which is the crowning event in Śaivism.

The car festival is important because it involved and does involve even today the population of the village, irrespective of caste. Caste is no bar in pulling the ropes and the high caste brahmin could be seen jostling with the untouchable in the past and no pollution was held to attach itself to any on this account. The story of Naminandi, one of the 63 Śaiva Saints in *Periya purāṇam*, illustrates this concept. Besides there is the greatest purpose of the involvement of the entire village making common cause in this regard and here we see religion serving as a great integrating force. For the nonce all differences are forgotten and a temporary oneness is achieved through religion.

Another aspect of the car festival which is shared by the other days' festivals is the *darśan* which Śiva gives to all people including those who had been prevented from entering the temple by custom or usage. God is the Father of all, not only the higher caste, but the lower castes as well. When the latter are unable to go to Him, He goes to them. This is the great value of the Festivals, particularly the car festival. There is also their involvement, as pointed out earlier, in drawing the chariot for a number of hours, together.

The car festival is again representative of Tripura samhāra. Sūrya-Candra are the two wheels of the chariot, (of Śiva as Paśupati), the four vedas are the four horses. Mount Meru is the bow and Viṣṇu the arrow, Agni its tip, Brahmā the charioteer, Praṇava is the whip.

The familiar verses from Tirumular's Tirumantram may be recalled here.

அப்பணி செஞ்சடை ஆதிபுராதனன்
முப்புரம் எரித்தனன் என்பர்கள் மூடர்கள்
முப்புரமாவது மும்மல காரியம்

"The fools say that Śiva burnt away the Three fortresses (*muppuram*). But Muppuram is the effects of the three *malas*."

THE ELEVENTH DAY - TĪRTHAVĀRI

Tīrthavāri (utsava) is observed on the day after the car festival. When the *tirtha* is on the sea, the day, not tithi is observed while in the other cases like the river, tank, etc., the nakṣatra is followed. The *dhvajārohaṇa* is fixed with reference to the *tirthavāri* day. Tīrthavāri is always done on the fore-noon. Bhava is one of the names (and forms) of Śiva; Bhava's consort is Jyēṣṭhā. She is in the form of water and on this occasion she cools down the heat of the cycle of births. The water on which *Astradeva* is immersed now, is considered a confluence of all the *tīrthas;* it is now the *tirtha* of *Aruḷ* or grace. Hence bath in the *tīrtha* water cools down heat, removes the impurities and immerses the individual in the Grace of Śiva.

The festival is observed in the following manner. Śiva and His Consort (in the form of Somāskanda) are taken in procession as usual to the water front, mounted on the bull. One of the gurukkaḷs carries the *Astra deva* on his hands. At the water front, a pūjā is done to Somāskanda and then the gurukkaḷ with the Astra deva seats it on a pedestal and goes through the ritual of all the abhiṣekas possible such as milk, curds, lime, sugar cane, tender coconut, scented powders and lastly sandal. Then he immerses himself, holding the Astra deva, in the water (of the river or the tank). This is the most important moment of *tirthavāri.* Simultaneously the vast throng of people gathered, men and women and children, all dip themselves in the water. The water in which the Astra deva bathes is considered by direct contact to purify all the bathers of all their impurities (of the body and the soul).

The gurukkaḷ then goes on to the bank, dries the astra deva, decks it with sandal and flowers, offers the usual food offering and there is a *karpūra ārādhana* to the Astra deva as well as to Somāskanda and the usual distribution of the sacred ash and kumkum as Śiva prasādam.

The same ritual is gone through for a Viṣṇu temple, with tīrtha distribution, saṭhāri and tulasi leaves.

The tirthavāri is also called the *Mahā Rudrapāda tirtham.* This concludes the car festival. The flag hoisted on the first day is now lowered. The people go home again eagerly waiting for the next year's car festival.

In the Brahmotsava of eleven days (including tirthavāri), each day's festival is held to symbolise a particular dance of Śiva. They have been denoted as follows: The first day-Prakṛti naṭanam; second-the karma (iruvinai, good and bad) naṭanam; third-naṭanam of the three guṇas; fourth-*antaḥ-karaṇa* naṭanam; fifth-pancendriya naṭanam; sixth-dance of the six faults kāma, krodha etc); seventh-the saptakoti mahāmantra naṭanam; eighth-vidyā tattva āṇava naṭanam; ninth-tirodhāyi or nava pāda naṭanam; the procession along the main streets – Śakti–Mukti naṭanam; rising up at dawn-the vāsanā (principle of involuntary attachment caused by the *malas*) naṭanam; tenth (car festival) pērinbātīta (even going beyond the bliss state) naṭanam; eleventh *Pati paśu pāśa* naṭanam.

There is a saying in Sanskrit that the Vedic brahmins perceive God in the Agni, the Yogis in their own hearts, the general mass the people in the images installed in the temples and to the *jñānis* capable of perceiving the Truth, He is present every where.

Agnau tiṣṭhati viprāṇām
hṛdi tiṣṭhati yoginām
Pratimāsvaprabuddhānām
sarvatra samadarśinām.

The ritualistic worship of God in the temple and the utsava performed seasonally and annually are intended to help the generality of the masses in ultimate God-realization.

THE DANCE OF NAṬARĀJA

The Dance of Naṭarāja is itself a vast subject and it is not our purpose here to speak about it. But some temples like the Mayilāppūr temple have the car festival on the Seventh Day and the Naṭarāja Dance festival on the Tenth day.

Chidambaram is the most important shrine for Śaivas all over Tamilnad and elsewhere. *Kōyil* is a common noun meaning temple. But as a proper noun it signifies Chidambaram for the Śaivas (and Sri Rangam for the Vaishṇavas). The Dance of Naṭarāja is considered to be symbolic of the *Pañcakritya* – the five functions of creation, preservation, dissolution, obscuration and grace. It is calculated to redeem the souls which are steeped in ignorance, and bound by the three *malas*, and help them to progress Godward.

The very form of Naṭarāja is itself held to be a visual representation of the five functions. The drum (*tuḍi*) held on the back right hand symbolizes creation; it produces sound from which all creation commences. The right forward hand held in an even pose signifies preservation. The left backward hand holding fire signifies dissolution. The right foot planted on the *abhasmara* (Muyalakan, personification of ignorance and the ego) signifies obscuration. The left foot held across in a sweep represents bliss or salvation. In Śaiva parlance, the released souls are said to take their final refuge under this lifted foot. Such is the significance of the form of Naṭaraja.

This is the *Ānanda-Ṭāṇḍava* of Śiva, calculated to bestow bliss, *ānanda* on the released souls. Similar dances of Śiva are about ten. The dance festival symbolizes only this *ānanda tāṇḍava*. This is special for Naṭarāja at Chidambaram on the Ārdrā day in the Tamil month of *Mārhaḷi*. It is conducted on the same day and hour in all Śiva temples, wherever they are.

Besides there are 11 classical dances of Śiva and other deities and they are mentioned elaborately in many classical books like *Silappadhikāram*. They are not relevant here.

The Naṭarāja dance and the *darśana* of Gajasamhāramūrti at Vaḷuvūr are on the same day. The seated-dance of Tyāgarāja at Tiru Ārūr and other important dances have considerable esoteric significance.

Along with the Naṭarāja festival, some temples celebrate the *ūḍal utsava.* Umādēvi (as Śivakāmasundarī the consort of Naṭarāja) gets enraged on imaginary grievances and refuses admission to Naṭarāja when He returns to the temple after His *Tiru Ulā*. St. Sundaramūrti acts as an intermediary or messenger between the two. (It may be recalled that in the life story of the Saint, Śiva at Tiru Ārūr acts as a messenger of love to Sundara and pacifies his enraged wife Paravai and re-unites the two.) Sundara now pacifies Śivakāmasundarī and makes Her accept Naṭarāja. Many esoteric meanings are given for this festival which is also called pandam-paṟi and maṭṭai aḍi-tiruviḻā, because in the first instance the maids of Umādēvī thrash Sundarar with plantain stalks (*maṭṭai*) and drive him away. This part of the festival (maṭṭai aḍi) though given great significance is not very important.

Others.

The concluding festivals are *Caṇḍēśā utsava* and *Ācāryotsava*. Caṇḍēśa is taken along the car streets with the usual paraphernalia as umbrella, music etc., finally restored to his place and a prayer is made to him to grant the full fruits of the Śiva mahotsava. This is known as *Bhaktotsava*, in honour of the Caṇḍeśa.

Similarly the Ācārya who does the utsava is considered as Sadāśiva Himself and he is taken round the car streets with full honours, restored to his home and necessary prayers also done to him.

The Viṣṇu temples also follow the same pattern. They have the usual flag hoisting, the car festival and the *tīrthavāri* and the lowering of the flag. The mounts and the taking out of the deities vary. They have the Sūrya and the Chandra prabhās, the Garuḍavāhana, Veṇṇaittāḻi (Kriṣṇa the child stealing the butter from the Gopis' houses"), the Kālinga narttana, the Hanumān vāhana, the horse mount, and the *tīrthavāri* or the *avabhṛtotsava*.

Needless to say, the Brahmotsava-flag hoisting, *sapparam* its *rathotsava* and *tīrthavāri* including the Naṭarāja Dance have been one of the major forces for the preservation of Hinduism, its continuity and cohesion over more than two millennia.

A NOTE ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATION OF THE DHARMA ŚĀSTRA.

BY

Dr. M. S. KALANIDHI,

U. G. C. Research Associate,

University of Madras.

The Dharma Śāstra is a record of the ethical behaviour of the ancient Hindus. It is a collection of twenty smṛtis which deal with the laws regulating the performance of religious rites, civil duties and atonement of sins. These regulations serve to maintain the organisation and integration of the self so characteristic of a healthy personality. The emphasis on the right conduct and abstinence from the wrong ones are ultimately directed towards the development of sense control and self control. It is this humanistic orientation of the Dharma Śāstra that is relevant to the psychology of Mental Health.

It is interesting to note that the virtues highlighted by the various Samhitas are hailed as the qualities of mental health by modern psychology. In Vāsiṣṭha Samhitā, Chapter X, it is said that back biting, envy, pride, conceit, disbelief, crookedness, self praise, slandering, egoism, avarice, stupefaction, anger and jealousy should be renounced by all orders equally. In the Gautama Samhitā, Chapter VIII, the following eight forms of spiritual virtues have been mentioned - kindness towards all creatures, forbearance, non-hostility, cleanness of spirit, annihilation of the desire to hurt anybody, doing good to all, absence of niggardliness and apathy.

In Vishṇu Samhitā, Chapter II, forgiveness, truthfulness, self-control, purity, charity, restraint of senses, abstention from injury, service of the elders, journeying on pilgrimage, mercy, simplicity, absence of avarice, adoration of the deities

and Brāhmaṇas and denunciation of envy are spoken of as the general duties of one and all. Lust, anger and greed are considered the dreadful enemies of a man. In Yājñavalkya Smṛti, it is again said that abstention from cruelty, truthfulness, purity, control of the senses, charity, mercy, self restraint, forgiveness, are the religious practices for all. According to Vishṇu Samhitā and Śatapatha Samhitā, good conduct, removes all the bad traits of man. bad conduct seeks to find out its perpetrator even in the next birth when the particular individual will be born with specific marks on the person or suffer from specific forms of illness. Likewise a man of good conduct unenvious in temperament though not possessing other qualifications is said to live for a century.

In this context of emphasising the importance of virtuous conduct, Śaṁkha Samhitā draws our attention to the vital necessity of a healthy body since only a healthy body can be a good abode of virtues.

So far right conduct has been prescribed as the first step in the direction of sense control. Through one's righteousness, the person is moulded externally to become inner directed. It is only by yoga that the sense and self can be conquered ultimately. Hence yoga is rated as a great religious method by Yājñavalkya. Yoga is not done by any physical exercise or abstention, but it is an inner control brought about by strict practice of concentration, firm resolution and detachment. By Yogic practices the various operations of the mind such as attachment, stupefaction, bashfulness and fear should be relinquished. By following the technique of Yoga, both the diseases of the body and the sins of the mind would be destroyed. Daksha Samhitā describes the eight angas of yoga and Śaṁkha Samhitā mentions the importance of control of breathing, concentration and meditation respectively.

Our ancient preceptors had a profound knowledge of the human psyche, its mysteries and treasures, weakness and strength. On the one hand, they sanctioned enjoyment of the

wordly life within a particular strata and on the other hand they prescribed suitable penances for any unwarranted misdeeds. Penance or atonement of one's sins is an interesting subject matter for psychological study. The purpose of penance is to make the individual consciously realise his sin, repent for the same, undergo the punishment prescribed and finally revert to good behaviour. The fact that the individual is accepted back by the respective group after the penance is a full proof of the assumed security in the case of conscious confession, repentance and suffering. It clears out not only the social stigma placed on the individual but also the sense of guilt in the person. Once the guilt has been identified, objectified, expressed and rectified there is restoration of mental equilibrium and strength. Penances are of different kinds, depending upon the context and the degree of purification required for the atonement of the particular sin. It may be in the form of gifts, feasting, abstinence or physical deprivation, sacrificial rites and varieties of self inflicted tortures. Among the different kinds of penances, there are several penances prescribed for sexual offences also; for instance 'knowing' one's stepmother, sister or brother, female members of the lower species etc. What is relevant here is the fact that long before the celebrated discovery of the unconscious and the libido, our great preceptors had intuitively known that man climb up not only to the highest of perfection but also go down to the lowest rung of perversion.

Ref: The Dharma Śastra—Hindu Religious Codes—M. N. Sutra, Vols, I, II, III, IV, Cosmo Publications, New Delhi, 1979.

PĀVAKOOTHU – THE SHADOW PLAY OF KERALA

BY

D. BOOPATHY*

Puppetry is known all over the world as an effective medium of entertainment and communication. Puppetry has reached new dimensions today invading the urban theatre as well. The puppet theatre of all varieties - rod, glove, marionettes– are active in India. The present study deals with the origin and development of pāvakoothu in Kerala, its theatrical aspects, details of the performances and list of the places where performances are held.

Kerala has a great antiquity in the performances of pāvakoothu, Shadow play of puppets. Pavakoothu enjoyed great popular favour in the Orient. From their antiquity in China, in the course of trade relationship and cultural contacts, the shadow play was carried to the Indonesian Islands, Siam and India, and was introduced into the West by the Mongols in their overland route across Asia. The entertainment is known to have attained great popularity by the twelth century.[1]

The shadow play has influenced the classical Indian drama is considered probable from the terms used in its nomenclature, such as sūtradhara or the stage manager,[2] a word which means

* Research Scholar, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Madras.

1. Raghavan, M. D. *Folk Plays and Dances of Kerala*, Rama Varma Archaeological Society, Trichur, 1947. P. 37.

2. The original meaning of the word sūtradhara is believed to be 'string holder'. Since this term is also used in classical Sanskrit theatre for the stage manager or producer role - the person who presents the play to the public - it is advanced by Pischel as one of the proofs of relationship between marionette theatre and drama employing live actors.

"the holder of the strings". The highest development of the shadow play in the Orient has no doubt been attained in the Indonesian islands and in Java in particular, where seven distinct forms are enumerated, drawing their main features from Ramayana cycle of stories.[3]

The different forms of puppet shows as they prevailed in India have not been revealed to us, and it is not generally known that a form of puppet play has long prevailed in Malabar which shows a remarkable parallel with similar shows elsewhere in South India. Its religious association is its most striking feature with the Indonesian parallel, and a most puzzling one, for while in Kerala it should be performed only outside the Kāli temples, it cannot be held within the very precints[4] of the temple.

Apart from their association with any play, there is a sacredness attached to effigies[5] as such. Effigies have been fashioned by the hand of man from palaeolithic times, and no doubt served a magical or ritual purpose. Figurines of human or animal forms are among the most favoured objects in sepulchral ceremonials[6] and the models symbolising the objects became invested with particular sacredness. It would not have been long before primitive man discovered that the figurines could cast shadows, which being insubstantial soon acquired greater sacredness, and a great step forward was taken when mechanical devices were employed to work the puppets, which acted in obedience to the puppeteer's pulling of wires or threads. The popular character of the entertainment has in course of ages overshadowed the religious and ritual element of the puppet play, though in Kerala its religious character is perpetuated in the dramatic presentation of the Rama legend,[7] and its association with Kāli worship.[8]

3. Raghavan, M.D. P. 37.
4. Space enclosed by outer walls or boundaries.
5. Person's portrait or images (in wood, stone etc.).
6. Pertaining to burial, to the grave.
7. Old story handed down from the past.
8. Raghavan, M.D. P. 38.

Pāva is a word common to both Malayalam and Tamil which means image, woman etc. It is believed that the form of a beautiful puppet was assumed by the God Mahāvishṇu to fascinate the Asurās. In ancient Malayalam, the name means *Stri* or woman. Pāvai in Tamil still means a girl but in Malayalam it has become *pāva* which means a puppet. As puppet shows are generally held in temples dedicated to the Goddess, the word Pāvai has the meaning woman and Goddess.

Koothu means an action play. There are different kinds of *Koothu*, *Chākkyar Koothu*, *Nangiār Koothu* and *Thōlpāvakoothu*. Koothu is performed in the *Koothambalam*.[9] Dance, music exposition, description, imitation, action, dumbshow - these are the characteristic features of koothu but pāvakoothu does not seem to be a member of this family.

Pāvakoothu which has been popular in Kerala for a long time are of two kinds - *Ola Pāvakoothu* and *Thōlpāvakoothu*, but it does not seem to owe anything to *Chākkyar Koothu*.

Unlike Kathakali and Ottam Thuḷḷal, the shadow play remains unfamiliar to a very large section of the population of Kerala; for its provenance is a small area, in and around Palghat district, the chief centres being villages such as Māthoor, Kūthanoor, Nallapilly, Pyloor, etc. This area has always been in intimate touch with the adjacent Tamil districts, and has sheltered for centuries a considerable Tamil population that has in its turn become very much Malayali in many respects.

The text of the shadow play is the Tamil *Rāmāyaṇa* of Kambar. The explanations and the dialogue are also in Tamil and the story-tellers are styled *Pulavars*, a Tamil designation. This is a departure from the predominant tendency of the post-Śankara era to use Sanskrit texts and to lapse occasionally into a prakrit of highly Sanskritised Malayalam as a vehicle for explanation.[10]

9. A part of the temple set apart for the purpose.
10. A Malayalam text for the Shadow play was obviously out of the question, since such a text had not come into existence at the time of its introduction into Kerala.

It is highly probable that the Tamil text of the Rāmāyaṇa play was introduced into the Kerala during Kambar's time probably in the ninth century A.D. In view of the reference in *Chilappadhikāram*, a Tamil classic of the early centuries of the Christian era, composed in the West coast, we have to presume that the shadow theatre was already existing in Kerala at that early date. In retaining Tamil, the story-tellers were merely adhering to the older tradition. They never attempted any linguistic change, for Tamil has always been well understood in Kerala. But an admixture of Malayalam words in the dialogue was inevitable. It may perhaps be relevant to state here that, before the romantic wedlock of Kairali (Malayalam) with Sanskrit, Kerala was for a considerable time a flourishing field for Tamil scholarship.

These dramas of sound and shadow, form part of the festivities of the spring festival in February, March and April. The play is an all-night open-air function taking as many as forty-one nights for an exhaustive treatment. The exigencies of modern life do not permit such an indulgence; it is completed in twenty-one nights, often in a fortnight, sometimes in seven days, but adhering to main incidents of the story.

The Puppets

The puppets, generally small (the largest are about two and a half feet), are of different sizes, all according to the traditional rules laid down in some remote past. The puppet made of deer skin,[11] considered holy, is preferred. The figures drawn in outline are picked out by light touches of the chisel. The innumerable clinks in the cut figures emphasise the silhouette picture or shadow cast on the white screen. They are then coloured, each puppet having the colour of the character it represents, dark blue for Rāma and golden hue for Sitā.

Of one piece is the *torso*, while the hands, legs, head and neck are made of separate pieces so joined together by wire or

11. The lightness of the material has given it the name *Olapāva*, signifying the fineness of *Ola* or the Cadjan leaf.

string as to make them move freely. The figures are not without decorative motifs such as necklaces, bracelets, anklets, or other decorative features, cleverly produced by artistic perforation of the material, the holes letting in light reproducing the ornamental designs. The thin framework of split bamboo at the back holds the figures and enables the performer to handle or manipulate them to suit the action desired.

The Performing Place

Koothu has its own peculiar stage arrangement. The stage of Chākkyar of Kerala is known as *Koothambalam.* The pāvakoothu performances are held in a covered enclosure called *koothumadam.* The length of stage is 42 feet. Its height is about ten feet from the ground. There are walls on three sides.

The *koothumadam* may best be conceived as the stage part of an open-air theatre, with spectators squatting in front. It faces south, though this may vary with reference to the location of the Bhagavati or Bhadra Kəli shrine with which the koothu as an institution is so intimately associated. Where performances are regularly and periodically given, the koothumadam may be masonry structure with tiled roof. More often it is a temporary shed, put up for the occasion.

The koothumadam being erected, is completely draped in front from floor to the eves, the upper in white and the lower in black curtain. The screen is marked off into two divisions by a wooden pole that passes through the centre to the roof of the koothumadam or play-house. The right side is reserved for noble characters of the play like Rāma, Sitā, Hanumān and their allies. The left side is for evil characters like Rāvaṇa and company. This well-marked differentiation between the powers of light and darkness are observed in the puppet theatre of Jāvā, where the masks are arranged in separate galleries and never brought together. All the puppets of the play are arranged in this way and pinned to the screen with thorns.[12] They are unpinned when required for manipulation.

12. Iyer, Bharatha *Dance, Dramas of India and the East*, Bombay, 1980.

Below the figures and immediately above black curtain, is arranged a long row of lamps, the light from which brightens up the white screen, on which are disposed about the figures which are reflected in silhouette on the side of the white curtain facing the assembled spectators. The light employed are either small pottery basin lamps in a large bamboo groove, each lamp fixed in a spat of clay, or are coconut halves, each half serving as a lamp arranged on long plank. The lamps burn each a single wick of rag fed with coconut oil. Even today, the old mode of lighting of the stage continues.

The Performance

Temple rituals and ceremonies precede the commencement of the show each night. At their conclusion, which secures divine benediction, an impressive procession escorting the story-tellers starts from the temple. The vibrant rhythms of the orchestra lend a festive air; the temple oracle, with his regalia is impressive for the assurance he carries of the hovering presence of the deity. A beautiful brass lamp light from the shrine, symbolic of the divine light, is carried reverentially. It is this fire that brings the puppets to life. The procession circumambulates the theatre thrice, for it is as much a temple. Soon it will reverberate with the deeds and voices of the great gods. The circumambulation ends with a vigorous drumming and with one drum-Chenda[13] and a pair of cymbals playing, the procession enters the theatre leaving the temple light outside. Inside, it is all dark. In this enveloping darkness where the audience remain in hushed silence, pulavars commence the singing of benedictory verses. The proceedings are invested with a certain sense of mystery and solemnity almost weird. The story-tellers cry out 'Ya Ho Arya', the drum and cymbals following it up with a discourse. The cry is repeated thrice, each time it rises higher, the orchestra keeps to the accentuation with louder pitches.

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13. A cylindrical drum beaten with sticks.

A bundle of cotton wicks soaked in oil then lighted from the temple lamp kept outside is now put out. The lighted wicks are put into the forty-one oil receptacles arranged on the split bamboo at the foot of the screen; one by one the puppets come to life, first an amorphous mass of shadows, then taking definite shape. As each lamp is lighted with the burning wick, an inflammable incense is thrown at it, the flames leaping up in a riotous swish.

Ten or twelve persons stand in a circle and start the show. Maddalam, Elathalam and other instruments produce the right musical backround. After propitiating Gaṇapati and lighting the lamps, the actors sing songs of welcome. First they praise Lord Gaṇapati, then Saraswati and Lord Nārāyaṇa. Boys appear on the stage and bow in respect to the audience. This *Vaṇakkam* or obeisance is known as *Pattuppāvakkaḷi*.

The entertainment opens with two Pattu Pāvas,[14] whose shadow is cast on the screen. Styled *Gangayaṭi Patter* and *Muthu Patter*, a narration is made of the long line of the departed pioneers and preceptors in the art, ending with an invocation of their blessing for the success of the show. Opportunity is also taken to bless the household under whose auspices the performance is held. The Patter Pāvas serve yet another purpose, the function of a prologue to the show, giving a resume of the previous night's entertainment and a forecast of the ensuing one. No sooner are the Patter Pāvas withdrawn than the show proper begins.

After worshipping the Gurus, they worship the Gods and make the pāvai (puppet) prostrate. Gaṇapati Pūjā is performed as at the beginning of the show, and the *Kiriḍa*

14. The following particulars which K. Bharatha Iyer gives will be read with interest. "The shadow of two Brahmin pilgrims then appear in the middle of the screen along with that of Gaṇeśa. A conversation ensues between the pilgrims. It being agreed amongst themselves that none amongst the gods is more fitted than Gaṇeśa, the remover of obstacles, to preside over the function to ensure its success, they invoke his presence and praise his immense prowess."

Pāva, or the figure of the crown, which has a ritual of its own is displayed. Śrī Rāma presently emerges to view wearing the crown. The night of the coronation is of particular sacredness, and is enlivened by ceremonial processions such as *talapoḷi* from the Bhagavati shrine. A highly entertaining play of deep religious character, Pāvakoothu as an institution deserves to be perpetuated.

The *Pulavar* community have certain rights and sanctions by tradition. The Namboodiri Illom and the Ooralans (those in charge of the administration of the temple) offer them a small sum of money each, eight or ten paṇams.[15] In front of the Koothumaḍam, one will sit and write the name of those who make offerings. Many offerings are made for improvement of crops, for protection of fowl and for protection of cattle from disease. Sometimes the number of those who make offerings may go up to three or four thousand. Their names are taken down. All these offerings go to the players.

Often, the owner of the temple will entertain the players to a splendid feast. Oil bath, food, a portion of the offerings to the temple are their right. After the play they get their reward. If the play is *Sītā Kalyāṇam*, the offerings made to Sītā in the shape of *Taḷi* and dress go to the players. If the play deals with the coronation of Śrī Rāma, players get clothes.

Full length shows of *Pāvakoothu* are not held in all seasons. In the Kavalappara temple, *Ārayankāvu* the complete story of Śrī Rāma from birth to coronation is staged. In Palappuram, Chenakathūr, the programme goes on for fourteen days. In Cherplasseri, Malayankāvu, the story begins from Śrī Rāma's arrival at Pañchavaṭi.

The grandeur of the *Koothu* depends upon the grandeur of the *Utsavam* (festival) in the temple. The Koothu in Kavalappara Aryankāvu is famous. The festival begins on the first day of Mīnam.

15. Here it refers to one rupee.

The first *Koothu* is conducted by the senior woman of the Kavalappara family. On the ninth day, the festival is conducted by the Elaya Nair of the family. On the 18th day of the month the function is conducted by Mūppil Nair. The evening begins with Nādaswaram followed by *Thāyambaka* which goes on till the beginning of the *Koothu.* At 10 p.m. the *Velichappād* circles the temple thrice, exhorts the owners of the temple to maintain tradition and promises to stand by them in weal and woe, and guide them.

The *Koothu* now begins, from the avatar of Śrī Rāma, and ends with Srī Rāma's coronation. This is the only temple in which the whole story of Śrī Rāma is presented. It takes forty one days to complete the whole story of Śrī Rāma. If it begins from Śrī Rāma's arrival at Pañchavaṭi, it will go for twenty one days. If the play begins from Setu Bandhanam, it will be completed in ten or twelve days.

Puppetry, both the marionettes and the shadow play is perhaps the most ancient stage-art of India, which is almost in the stage of decline. Scholars are of the opinion that the classical drama owes much to the shadow theatre. The shadow theatre which survives in Keṛala is the connecting link with the Asian theatre culture in theme, presentation, production etc. *Thōlpāvakoothu* of Kerala is the full fledged theatre production for the village folk with special attention given to painting, decorative arts, dialogue, moments, lighting, sound, stage techniques such as scenic description, stage craft etc. Puppet theatre employed a motive and represented the people's forum for a visual media. *Pulavars,* the inhabitants of Tamilnadu were the theatre specialists and scholars who established this folk performing concept in Kerala.

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THE THREE GODS, THE THREE *GUṆAS* AND THE THREE SYLLABLES OF *OM*: A STUDY IN HOMOLOGIZATION IN THE MAITRĀYAṆA-BRĀHMAṆA UPANIṢAD

ARVIND SHARMA

I

The Īśopaniṣad speaks of the Lord or the Personal God in general[1] but in the Muṇḍaka, the Kaṭha and the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads the three gods of the Hindu trinity - Brahmā,[2] Viṣṇu[3] and Śiva[4] - find their distinct mention. All three are then referred to in the Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad.[5] The three *guṇas*,[6] as distinguished from *guṇa* in the singular,[7] also find a clear mention in the Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad. Moreover the Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad also reveals a distinct pattern of association between the three gods of the Hindu trinity and three *guṇas* in that it consistently associates *rajas* with Brahmā; *sattva* with Viṣṇu and *tamas* with Śiva.[8] This is one interesting aspect of the Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad. The other interesting aspect of the Upaniṣad is provided by its discussion of the OM sound - its dissection into its constituent syllables A U M[9] and the identification of these syllables with various triads. In one particular passage such identifications come quite densely packed;

> And thus it has been said elsewhere: This OM is the sound-endowed body of him (Prāṇādityātman). This is

1. Īśa Upaniṣad 1.
2. Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad I. 1.
3. Kaṭha Upaniṣad I. 3. 9.
4. Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad III. 2.
5. Maitr yaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad IV. 5 etc.
6. Ibid., V. 2.
7. Ibid., VI. 30.
8. Ibid., V. 2; VI. 8.
9. Ibid., VI. 4.

his gender-endowed body, viz. feminine, masculine, neuter. This is his light-endowed body, viz., Agni, Vāyu, Āditya. This is his lord-endowed body viz., Brahmā, Rudra, Viṣṇu. This is his mouth-endowed body, viz. Gārhapatya, Dakshiṇāgni, Āhavanīya. This is his knowledge-endowed body, viz. Rik, Yajus, Sāman. This is his world-endowed body v.z. Bhuḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ. This is his time-endowed body, viz. Past, Present and Future. This is his growth-endowed body, viz. Food, Water, Moon. This is his thought-endowed body, viz. intellect, mind, personality. This is his breath-endowed body, viz. Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna. Therefore by the aforesaid syllable Om are all these bodies enumerated here praised and identified[1]...

It will be noticed that in this cluster of identifications the three parts of OM are connected with the three gods.[2] It was noticed earlier how the three *guṇas* are connected with the three gods. But nowhere in the Upaniṣad are the three *guṇas* connected with the three parts of OM !

1. Ibid., VI. 5; F. Max Muller, *The Upaniṣads*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900, p. 308.

2. In later Hinduism the identification becomes patent but not in the order given in the preceding quotation. The usual order in which the three gods are enumerated is Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Benjamin Walker remarks that OM "is compounded of three sounds, *a*, *u*, *m*, representing the three Vedas (*Rig*, *Yajur*, Sāma), the three worlds (heaven, atmosphere, earth), the three chief deities (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva)" (*The Hindu World*, Vol. II, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968, p. 104). The statement is correct but not the order, for as Monier-Williams points out: "In later times OM is the mystic name of the Hindu triad and represents the union of the three gods, viz. (a) Viṣṇu, (u) Śiva, (m) Brahmā". Similarly A B. Keith refers to "the normal equation of its elements with the Hindu trinity of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā which is already found in the later Upanisads and is foreshadowed earlier" (James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917, p. 492). It is worth noting that the three gods do not seem to have ever been mentioned in this order in the Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad, as will be demonstrated later.

The purpose of this paper is to examine if this omission can be satisfactorily explained.

II

The Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad makes a very explicit connection between the *guṇas* and the three gods:

> In the beginning darkness (*tamas*) alone was this. It was in the Highest, and, moved by the Highest, it becomes uneven. Thus it becomes obscurity (*rajas*). Thus it becomes goodness (*sattva*). Then this goodness, being moved, the essence flowed forth ... Now that part of him which belongs to darkness, that, O students, is he who is called Rudra. That part of him which belongs to obscurity, that, O students, is he who is called Brahmā. That part of him which belongs to goodness, that, O students, is he who is called Viṣṇu.[1]

One should note that the order in which the cosmogeny via the *guṇas* is described follows the sequence of *tamas*-*rajas*-*sattva*. But the order in which the cosmology is described via the trinity is Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, the "creator" "preserver" and destroyer" of the finite cosmos respectively. In another context, even when the Self is being identified with the three gods, the order is "Īśāna, Śambhu, Bhava, Rudra; Prajāpati, Viśvasṛj, Hiraṇyagarbha, Satyam, Prāṇa, Haṁsa"; and Śāstrī, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa ...".[2] The order can best be explained in terms of the three guṇas; *tāmasa*, *rājasa*, and *sāttvika* as Max Muller parenthetically inserts after each set.[3]

However, when it comes to enumerating the three gods together by themselves, the Upaniṣad seems to follow two

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1. Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad V. 2; F. Max Muller, *op. cit.* pp. 303-304.
2. Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad VI. 8. As Robert Ernest Hume points out (*The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 429 fn. 1) this paragraph is repeated verbatim in VII. 7.
3. Max Muller *op. cit.*, p. 311.

patterns: (1) it uses the order Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra[1] or (2) it uses the order Brahmā, Rudra, Viṣṇu.[2] Now none of these two orders can be squared with the enumeration of the three *guṇas* and the associations made between the gods and the *guṇas*. As noticed earlier the association is as follows;

tamas	*rajas*	*sattva*
Rudra	Brahmā	Viṣṇu

While the order of enumeration in evidence in the Upaniṣad is either:

Brahmā	Viṣṇu	Rudra

or

Brahmā	Rudra	Viṣṇu

Now the reason for not carrying over the association of the gods with the *guṇas* over to the OM syllables becomes clear in terms of the internal dynamics of the Upanisad. In an enumeration of the gods, Brahmā comes first. But Brahmā is associated with *rajas* and even if we reverse the order of the enumeration of the *guṇas*-make it ethical rather than cosmogenic so to say-and refer to *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* in that order, *rajas* still falls in the centre. While in all enumerations of the *guṇas, rajas* must take the middle position, in all enumerations of the gods Brahmā takes the initial position. Thus only one of these two enumerations can really be synchronised with OM as their simultaneous identification will create an internal conflict in the pattern of correspondences.[3]

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1. Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad V. 1; VI. 26.
2. Ibid., IV. 5, VI. 5.
3. But why should Brahmā be theologically frozen in the initial position? It could be argued that at this stage in the development of Hinduism Brahmā was still an important God; (See Sukumari Bhattacharji, *The Indian Theogony,* Cambridge University Press, 1970, Chapter 17 passim; also see Benjamin Walker, *op. cit.*, Vol I, pp. 164–166) it is only after he had lost his importance in later Hinduism that he was put at the tail-end in the correspondence between the three sounds of OM and the three gods and given a terminal position.

III

To conclude: the internal logic of the Upaniṣad allowed the identification of only one triad - of the three *guṇas* or of the three gods - with the AUM. The author or authors of the Upaniṣad obviously chose the latter option. Both combinations of triads could not be simultaneously included without involving the author in a conflicting permutational correspondence.

I

REPORT OF SEMINARS

A Lecture on 'Medicine applied to Metaphysics' was delivered by Dr. K. Ravi Shankar, M B.,M.S.,M.Ch. (Genito Urinary), University Medical Officer, University of Madras, at 4-15 P.M on the 6th November 1978 in room No. 48, University Departmental Buildings, Madras 5 under the chairmanship of Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A.,D.Litt ,D.Phil.(Oxon.).

The Chairman introduced the Lecturer and called on him to deliver the lecture:

Dr. K. Ravi Shankar; These are random thoughts. There may be a grain of truth in them. An attempt is made to connect Philosophy, Astrology, Astronomy and Medical Knowledge. The fabric of thoughts may appear to have some continuity but with lots of gaps, jumps and skips.

The range of these 'RANDOM THOUGHTS' would cover the following

ENDOCRINES AND ASTROLOGY * BODY AS AN ELECTRICAL GADGET - UNIVERSAL TEACHER, INDEPENDENCE versus INTERDEPENDENCE, ORBITAL LIVING AND ROCKETRY — THEORY OF KARMA, CONCEPT OF COSMIC FORM — SCIENCE AND MYTHOLOGY — DWAITAM AND ADWAITAM, SAMADHI AND ANAESTHESIA — SONICS, SPOKEN WORDS, MANTRAS AND TELECOMMANDS

Endocrines and Astrology

The Endocrine glands usually described are Pituitary, Thyroid, Para thyroids, Thymus, Pancreas, Adrenals, Gonads, Kidney, and Pineal Gland. Pituitary is the master of the endocrine orchestra and practically controls and gets feed-back

from most of the endocrine members. A few are independent. Their secretions are small quanta with widespread effects. Their role is cyclical, reciprocal, exciting, suppressive, unifocal and universal within the body.

Look at the pituitary function. It controls growth of the whole body and practically all activities of the body. Its disease may cause growth disturbances and interfere with Eye functions.

The Sun though a star by scientific thoughts is considered a planet in Astrology and its immense influense on GROWTH of every living being may well be equated with the functions of the Pituitary. The following Table roughly gives us a correlation between the endocrine members and the planets.

Sun	Pituitary	Growth
Ketu	Pineal	
Saturn	Parathyroids	Bones
Jupiter	Thyroid	Metabolism Activity
Mercury	Thymus	Muscle Power
Venus	Pancreas	Energy utilisation
Mars	Adrenals	Alarm Reaction Fight or Flight
Rahu	Kidneys	Blood Pressure Waste Elimination Acid Base Balance
Moon	Gonads	Sexual rhythm and Activity

Similarly the nine planets' known influences could be correlated with the functions of the endocrine glands. The menstrual cycle of the female having a proliferative phase of the uterine epithelium followed by a decidual phase coming on in a cyclical fashion could well be compared with the 'SUKLA and KRISHNA PAKSHA' (i.e.) waxing and waning fortnights of the phases of the moon.

Body as an Electrical Gadget

According to astrology there are nine planets and two others have now been added to the list namely Uranus and Neptune. They all have electromagnetic radiations released in quanta which pervade the whole universe and influence every other electrical gadget and objects. Man is also an electrical gadget. Electro encephelogram, Electrocardiogram, Electromyogram are all the proofs of our electrical nature. This explains our susceptibility to extraneous electrical influences of a powerful nature and its inevitable effects. Like us all beings are electrical gadgets on their own and have specified frequency, function, liability to have short circuiting, earthing, explosions, and wrong connections precipitating berserk behaviour. All these can happen to the human being by planetary influences.

In daily life we accept many things as established facts and do not question them. Glass tumbler will definitely break into pieces irrespective of who drops it down. A motor car engine inspite of very good maintenance has to be rebored after some years, parts must be changed or at the worst must be replaced by a new one. But when the same thing is applied to the human being we do not want to accept it. Apart from self repairing facilities we also require maintenance, replacement of parts that are declared unserviceable. When one realises this truth we accept it with the right spirit and do not regret or pine over it. This does not mean negativism. It only means that we have understood the limitation of this human body as a gadget and use it efficiently for the functions it is meant for.

It is said that in his younger days Lord Buddha as a prince while on city rounds used to feel very sad whenever he met diseased people beggars and decrepits. Only to find a solution to these problems he started a self enquiry and ended up as Bodhi Sattva. The spiritually emancipated who have understood 'SAMSARA' look at it in the correct perspective and lead a serene unattached life which Śankara aptly describes as 'Nalini Dalagata Jalamati Dhavalam' type of existence.

When Buddha attained this knowledge his original doubts and attempts at enquiry all vanished. He knew that the physical body was like any other matter with its inherent properties like ageing, disease, repair, disuse, destruction etcetera. This has to be accepted and to be treated, repaired and kept in a fit condition as a vehicle for the enlightened soul to utilise and act. The same is said in Gītā as 'kshetra' and kshetrajña'.

Universal Teacher — Orbital Living and Rocketry — Independence Versus Interdependence

Universal teacher when he tells universal truths through saintly souls all of them had said the same thing though in different languages. The theoretical analysis was given to those desciples who could understand and the simple Do's and Dont's were given to common masses who may not be able to appreciate the theory. Christ, Buddha, Zoraster or Mohammed all said the same commandments. Krishna said it effectively "karmaṇyevādhikāras te Ma Phaleṣhu kadācana." What god is doing to us we are doing to our children. When they are young you only feed them with facts. When they become mature enough to understand they digest the facts and ruminate on them. This is mainly because all of us are caught up in orbital living and thinking. Inherently we like to revolve in the same orbit. We do not like any change, but when the change comes it has to be effected with great thrust. The rocket to leave the earth and to go into its own orbit requires tremendous thrust with booster fuels. Then after leaving the earth's gravitational pull, it again settles down in its new orbit. It requires further kick to go away and be free. In the same way many events in life nicely designed or badly devised give us the kick to jump from one orbit to the other. When you get into a new orbit you forget your old orbit. Death of a near and dear one, incurable disease, financial loss of a heavy nature, contact with great soul and direct emancipation by the Lord himself all these changeth our orbital nature. Just as in bacteriology all of us (i e.) the individual souls are given the free will equivalent to Brownian Movement but motility is restricted and controlled. Free will itself is not really free. It

is also conditioned. Freedom is only a relative term. You cannot be independent; you have to be interdependent. But whoever claims vociferously and advocates 100% freedom within themselves know that it is not so and is only 100% 'FREEDUMB' (i.e.) you are free but cannot talk. All these anamolies happen because we confuse the body for the soul. The T.V. thinks it is the master and not the electrical energy which runs it. It does not understand or appreciate that the same electricity which runs the radio, the recorder, the refrigerator, the transmitter, the water pump, the fan, etcetera runs it also. The motive force is the same only the names and forms are different. The energy which activates them cannot be seen but can be experienced. The fundamental differences between our gadgetry and the ones we manufacture are—

1. there is spontaneous repair facility going on side by side with wear and tear.
2. by applying strong will and faith we can reduce the wear & tear and increase the longevity and performance.
3. MOST IMPORTANT BEING OUR ABILITY TO TRANSFORM OURSELVES INTO A DIFFERENT GADGET WITH MULTIPLE FUNCTIONS* — TWO in ONE, Three in ONE etc.
4. We will become a 'TIME MACHINE' able to go forward or backward in time equivalent to 'KĀLA SAMHĀRA MŪRTI'.
5. We can conquer space, we can levitate and we can fly too!

Theory of Karma - Concept of Cosmic form

The story of Lord Muruga becoming 'Thagappan Chāmi' is only to emphasize that God is a universal teacher and all teachers must be respected and honoured. The concept of a family of Gods with all the usual members of a family is only to impress the ordinary citizen that each member must play his allotted role in the drama of life. In one's own walk of life one must strive to become the best. Then only every

being's contribution will be to the maximum and to the best interest of the unit as a whole. This can easily be understood by taking our own body as an example. The body's image is only a total concept of various functioning organs covered by skin which gives it a form. Remove the skin from evrybody-they all will look like skeletons with mutton on it. So the name is only for the form. Unless all the organs work in unison with cooperation there is no harmonious whole. The stomach can take rest for a few hours.; the brain can take rest barring vital functions. Can the heart take rest for quarter of an hour? Still it takes rest during the diastole. It has to play its allotted role and not compare itself with the hair, skin etc and take rest. Similarly in the cosmic form of the lord all of us are his various parts. We may even be compared to the Red blood corpuscles. We are born, we play our role for a specified period, then we are destroyed; and again we are rebuilt to play the role with renewed vigour. In nature also science has accepted the concepts of recycling and nondestructibility of energy. Probably understanding this elemental truth by our past seers made them say 'OUR FATHER IS IN HEAVEN - WE ARE HIS CHILDREN'. Evolutionarily when this concept is not only accepted but realised then we appreciate the unity in diversity of the manifest world, the indestructibility of the soul and all the orbital and cyclical phenomena. When this realisation comes we give up greed, hate, anger, lust and fear.

It is roughly estimated that an adult has around 35 million million red blood corpuscles in his vascular system. All of these are born in the bone marrow as recticulocytes. They mature into erythrocytes live for about 80 to 120 days and have their graveyard in the spleen. They are broken down into their constituents and again rebuilt into rbc s. Now this poses a fundamental question. Does the individual R. B. C. know that it is part of so and so, the human being? Does it know that in spite of its death and destruction still it is rebuilt and put into circulation with renewed vigour? - and hence truly it NEVER DIES and has only rebirths in continuity of time?

Just like this we are also red blood cells inside the Cosmic form or 'VIŚVARŪPA'. We never die. We have only rebirths with renewed vigour. We are also ignorant (MĀYĀ) that we are part of Him all the while. For the red cell to know its master it must develop a special insight and knowledge and comprehension. Similarly in Mahabharata Vidura and Dhritharashtra were given specialised vision by the Lord different from the mortal eye to perceive the cosmic form.

Why should the Almighty be partial allowing some to be happy all the time without restricting them and making others suffer even though they are good. This is the common argument put forward by many to deny the existence of the Almighty. Let us look at it from a different angle. Take your own eyes for example. You want to see everything around you in an unrestricted way. Evil things attract you more. You want to love with your eyes, lust with it hate with it etc. You do uot make any attempt to restrict its ambit and at the same time you want to protect it at all costs to the maximum. When it comes to your own nails, hair you do not mind cutting them daily, weekly or monthly as a matter of fact routine. When it comes to other parts like fingers, toes, limbs etc you do not mind losing them! You say that certain parts if not cut in time they become a nuisance value. In an accident you do not mind losing a limb as opposed to losing an eye. Why? Does it mean that you are partial to your own organs?

The answer is that the eyes also must be restricted not by removing it but by deliberately curtailing it from bad influences. Similarly one would not like to be nailless or hairless. But the same eye when it becomes diseased with threat to the whole body one does remove it unhesitatingly.

So what does it mean? Partiality or priority for the well being of the individual who is the whole and not the parts. When this concept is applied to the society or country as a whole it will work well but not when applied to an individual however great a leader he may be...

Science and Mythology.

The pregnant uterus itself containing the foetus floating in amniotic fluid with its umblical cord going up to the placenta can be compared to Lord Vishnu as Padmanabha lying in the milky ocean. The umblical cord and the placenta will be the lotus and its stalk representing Padmanabha and the uterus itself will be Adiśesha.

Hindu gods represented by phallic symbol has come for criticisms. The 'linga' is the male element and the base or 'Āvuḍai' is the female element. Male element is the 'Purusha' and the female element is the 'Śakthi'. Their union is 'Prapañca', their combination is 'Ardhanari.' Genetically also all of us are half mother and half father with slight preponderance of one element. We are all 'Ardhanaris,' in the true perspective.

To leave gravitational pull of the earth and its orbit of influence we require a lot of thrust. To travel in space we require additional protection from radiation, oxygen lack and weightlessness. Then according to Einstein's theory of relativity- A father 55 years old had a son 5 years old. The father travelled at the speed of light for 5 yrs and came back. To his dismay he found many of his relatives, and friends had died. His own son was older than him and refused to recognise him. This is explained scientifically. Now compare it with the tale about Arjuna in Mahabharata - during the banishment of Paṇḍavas. Arjuna went to the moon. He was advised that he cannot go there with the mortal frame because it will get destroyed. So he took the 'Sukshma śarira' and landed on the moon. He met many of his forefathers and recognised them but they refused to recognise him. All of them looked very healthy and young. This is very similar to the previous scientific theory.

Now take Rāmāyaṇa — when Rāvaṇa was killed Rāma had to return quickly to Ayodhyā lest Bharata should immolate

himself as per his vow. So he flew with all his retinue in 'Pushpaka Vimānam' akin to our helicopter and landed in time to save his brother.

Take the modern space vehicles. You give them orders from the earth telecommands-and they perform the duty assigned to them unmanned. An arrow will be released from the bow with a particular mantra and it will do its work thoroughly unmanned. The correct i tonation and pronunciation of the mantra is very essential otherwise the meaning may change and the missile may act differently. Aswathāma towards the end of Kurukshetra war plucked out a blade of grass chanted a mantra and directed it to uproot the Pandavas lock stock and barrel and to genetically damage the foetus of the third generation in the womb itself. Krishna personally intervened to save the dynasty. Sonic waves, ultrasonics, supersonics are but sound waves which once released cannot be called back. Energy good or bad c nnot be destroyed and can only be changed. That is why our learned people said-contr l your tongue-always talk softly and sweetly. The mind conceives the voice box, modulates the sound waves and the tongue articulates and delivers the sound waves. So when many good souls get harassed and start cursing individually or in groups the effect comes as a cumulative deposit on the tyrannical group. 'OM' or the praṇava mantram is the all pervading sound - you keep an empty flask to your ear and the 'OM' will be heard. It will be very interesting side light to note that the contour of the human ear is similar to the Tamil vowel ஓ to receive the sound waves.

Dvaitam-Advaitam-Samādhi-Anaesthesia

In the working of any body there is an accelerating side and a braking side; sympathetic and parasympathetic male element and female element-good aspect and bad aspect-constructive and destructive-growth and retardation etc, etc. In other words every thing is a pair of opposites, the basic idea being to strike a balance in the final function. They are just

like the reverse and obverse faces of the same coin (i.e.) they are not two different entities but the two aspects of the same entity. Putting it differently 'Dvaitam' or duality is nothing but the two aspects of the same unity or 'Advaitam'. Apply this formula and make a statement like this–Fame and shame both are same-its first half is dvaitam and the second half is advaitam. In other words as one progresses in spirituality on should cultivate and develop the advaitic attitude, which means equanimity of mind in prosperity and adversity or wisely called 'Niścala Citta'. When one understands and reaches this state one is free from duality. The same state is possible to be achieved by us consciously controlling the autonomic nervous system consisting of sympathetic and parasympathetic. The control can be exercised only for a limited duration beyond which again its functions have to be autonomous to ensure life and safety. If this time limit is exceeded the body as a gadget may be in jeopardy. Bhagavan Ramakrishna advised Vivekananda not to enter into deep and indefinite 'Samādhi' because he had to exist for some more time to perform some obligatory duties to his fellow beings. This takes us on to a few thoughts about samādhi. During this state it is said that one is in a state of uninterrupted ecstasy in the cosmic world and totally oblivious of the material manifest world. Re stating this phenomenon 'One is consciously unconscious' as opposed to total unconsciousness of anaesthesia. It is said Bhagavān Ramaṇa Maharshi allowed the doctors to operate on his cancer but without administration of anaesthesia. He did not wince with pain. He was consciously unconscious. I think it is possible by concerted effort, meditation and deliberate conversion of centrifugal energy wasted through the five senses into centripetal energy for one be able to manufacture and accumulate a chemical neurotransmitter in the subarachnoid space of the spinal cord at the sacral level equivalent to 'Mūlādhāra' which by further effort and practise can be made to ascend higher and higher and influence greater areas of the nervous system and make them consciously unconscious and realise 'Sat-Cit-Ānanda'.

Language and Meaning

The word 'ātmā' of Hinduism and 'Atom' of Dalton meant the same thing. It is indestructible, it is indivisible. Later it was discovered that Atomic Fission gave out tremendous energy and still later it was found that Atomic Fusion released much more energy than Fission.

(i.e) FISSION or UNTIE there is ENERGY
FUSION or UNITE there is ENORMOUS ENERGY
UNITE and UNTIE are anagrams. If you allow your senses to go unbridled you UNTIE and waste energy. If you concentrate and meditate you UNITE and build energy.

In Tamil God is called கடவுள். It can be made to interpret கட + உள்ளே (i.e.) cross over to the internal leaving the external materialistic world and realise the self.

If one reads any Chapter on Fluid balance in the body it will be mentioned that Sodium is the all pervading extracellular cation and Potassium is the chief intracellular cation. Sodium is easily transferable and moves all over excepting into the cell where the cell membrane due to a sodium pump effect keeps it away. Potassium on the other hand seldom leaves the cell excepting when the cell is ruptured or destroyed. Sodium in chemistry is symbolised as Na and potassium as K. Na is *N*ara*N*ārāyaṇa and K is *K*rishṇa. Na is all pervasive and K lives in every cell. Na is the individual, wandering all over the place. K is the ultimate truth present in every cell. The barrier is the cell wall or Māyā. Once the ignorance is cleared, Nara Nārāyaṇa and Krishṇa merge into one another and become the reality, which is always there, all pervading. When wisdom dawns, you realise the full meaning of the statement "Tat Tvam Asi"; "Thou art That".

The Chairman in conclusion thanked the Lecturer for his interesting lecture and the audience present.

II

REPORT OF SEMINARS

The Institute of Traditional Cultures held a seminar at 4-15 P.M. on the 12th Decembər 1980 in Room No. 48, University Departmental Building, on 'the Traditions in Japan' led by Dr. Chandra Y. Mudaliar, M.A., Ph.D., under the chairmanship of Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D.Litt., D. (Phil) (oxon). The following is the report of the proceedings of the seminar.

The chairman introduced the leader and requested her to lead the seminar:

Dr. Chandra Y. Mudaliar: Japan today stands as a major economic power and like India a prime example of non-Western democracy. Since the 17th century her feudal society has been getting transformed into one that is "modern". But Japan's modernity, a condition of society, has certain distinctive features, rendering her experiment in modernization a unique one. Beasley holds that the modernity of a country including that of the West, springs from a context. (W.M. Beasley, 1975) And that is especially true of Japan. Also it evolves out of special historical experiences and responses to economic and technological changes. Japan conforms as much to this iron law of social change as she reveals a unique experiment in modernization, i.e. the synthesization of her traditional value system with modern economic and technological developements. It is very important to understand her unique process of modernity and its overall impact. In fact, the urge to understand Japan has become universal for she seems to have special relevance for the world today.

Relevance of Japan.

It is interesting how in each period of history there are one or two nations or people whose particular virtues and qualities are specially suited and appropriate for historical

developments or world's progress. The French people's commitment to ideas of freedom and rationalism shaped the purpose and content of democracy, though this in turn has resulted in a long-drawn experiment in shaping appropriate institutions for democracy. The Dutch, the French and the British elitist type of society and generalist education among others provided the kind of leadership which the growth of empire needed from the 17th century onwards; but the same seem to be inadequate for the technological and pluralist world of the twentieth century. As we move to 21st century, with its deep-seated societal and industrial revolutions, it is the Japansese social structure, values and mores which seem to be more appropriate and relevant.

Historical Perspective

It is generally assumed that modernization in Japan was ushered in by the Meiji Restoration of 1867; it would be more appropriate to state that it (modernization) was actually accelerated with the Meiji Restoration. Cyril Black when examining modernization, identifies in chronological term three stages of development (Cyril Black, et al. 1975). In the first stage, which ends roughly in 1860, the social and cultural norms and the historical processes prepared the ground for ushering of modernization. During this period, the tradition of borrowing, mainly from China was predominant and shaped the social, cultural and economic norms, practices and institutions of management and society. During the Tokugawa Shogunate (1600-1868) the Shogunate was strong, yet the local Hans played a strong role within their jurisdiction. Between them both at the national and local levels conditions of comparative peace and stability were created. Since tradition of juridical rights of individuals never really existed in Japan, as also they did not in Hindu and Muslim India, there was no challenge to the governmental power. Added to this, the population was overwhelmingly rural and the nation enjoyed self-sufficiency in grain production and there was considerable development of industry. Thus the ground had been created in terms of

institutional and human capacities, essential for a faster pace of development which is basic to modernization.

Besides a significant geographical factor, the insularity of the country of Japan, as in the case of Britain, created a strong sense of consciousness. Therefore, when imperialism and colonialism were spreading all over the South and South East Asia, swallowing up country after country, no people or government stood up to the challenge in the same measure as did Japan. Some in India simply shrugged their shoulders and others joined hands and some others made but belated and inadequate attempts to meet the challenge. The great but slumbering China merely turned over to the other side after the Opium War. In Japan on the other hand, it was clearly realised that both the government and the system were inadequate to measure up to the challenge. While this ensured a civil war, it also impressed upon the thinking people the necessity to modernise the system.

The second stage of development spans the years 1860 to 1940 and modernization accelerated specially from the Meiji Restoration of 1867 onwards. There was a great deba'e on the mode of modernization, and the consensus was to adopt western institutions but conform to their own spirit. And this is well expressed in the slogan of the Meiji period i.e. *Wakon Yoosai* (Japan-se *Spirit* and Western *Means*), and it is this which explains a close connection between the tradition and modernity in Japan. The chief agent in these changes was the central government. During the period Japan had certain advantages. Her losses in the Sino-Japanese war were made up by the significant victory in the Russo-Japanese War and a partial victory during and after the First World War. During the earlier stages of modernization the goals were rapid transformation to the new economic and social order. By 1890s the focus was more or less on the monolithic goal of national development by building a "wealthy nation" and a "strong army". In the pursuit of this goal the destiny of the nation

came to be increasingly controlled by big industrial houses and the army. This proved, however, disastrous for Japan.

The third stage is the contemporary era which begins with defeat of Japan in the second world war. Since the end of the war, however, the focus has been only on "a wealthy nation" and the idea soon struck deep roots. After absorbing the calamities of the Second World War, in fact in some ways because of it, Japan was soon ready to proceed as a mature economy and the post-war rebuilding left her with the most modern productive equipment. Even though the defeat had discredited the imperial system, the induction of a new constitution and reforms as well as a judicious and selective retention of traditional native practices and norms facilitated the emergence of a pluralistic regime, the democratization and broadbasing of leadership, particularly in its industrial and business management, where the level and the rate of production were soon put in the top gear.

Modern Japan :

By dint of hard work, surpassing even the best Calvinistic ethic of hard work, and her ability to adapt quickly to advanced technology, Japan to-day has become a major economic power. It is often remarked that the Japanese have just unwittingly won the World War II. Indeed they have even exceeded the wildest dreams of their military masters of four decades ago. Their success story simply boggles one's mind.

Tradition and Modernity :

But modernization is more than an economic phenomenon and its other significant aspects are social and political. What is of special interest to us and the modernizing countries is the Japanese mode of modernization, where they have, to a great extent, dovetailed their indigenous system of values and practices to the Western ideas and institutions. What one witnesses in Japan, therefore, is that their formal structure, a structure of institutions, procedures and rules is western, but the informal structure – a structure of values, norms and practices, which motivates the formal structure is essentially Japanese. And

the Meiji slogan *Wakon Yoosai* (Japanese spirit and western means) is still a live-wire in the process of modernity. This process of modernization, therefore, has tended to synthesize the tradition with modernity.

It is the informal structure and how it motivates the formal structure which should merit our attention. In delineating them, the focus must be on the social and cultural factors, for these are essentially traditional. The most significant among them are: groupism, the *Oyabun-kobun* sentiment (parent - child relation) which is the bed - rock of paternalism as also that of business and industrial management; the essence of the concept of *Ie* (household management) the concept of *Giri* (duty); the emphasis on fair share rather than fair play which is essentially a western value. There are also certain typical Japanese practices and procedures. These are the *Lingi Sei*:, Nemawashi, principle of seniority, life employment, their brand of unionism and such others. All these factors which form the essence of traditional culture are very strong. Some of them which are intangible traditions are deeply enmeshed in the patterns of behaviour, which at times strike one as quite enigmatic, for example, that of suicide. It (suicide) is considered as the most desirable way of atoning for failure or negligence or to clear one's name. When in 1930 one of the members of the staff of the Waseda University was suspected of leaking out the entrance examination question-paper he preferred to commit suicide rather than establish his innocence, which was not unconvincing. Also personal loyalty is considered more important than loyalty to any abstract concept such as truth, testifying in Parliament or Court.

Groupism is very strong among the Japanese. When comparing Japan with other industrial countries, most social scientists give the central place to the tendency among the Japanese towards group involvement. This involvement is, as said earlier, deeply enmeshed in the pattern of behaviour and the modern organizational pattern has been infused by this ancient, traditional value.

Why is this tendency strong among the Japanese? In a fascinating study of group formation and group involvement Chie Nakane (Nakane, 1979) identifies two belongings the world over. One is by *attribute* and the other is by *frame*. The attribute group is entered through ascription, birth or through occupational specialization. Here, therefore, caste or class realities would be strong, Whereas the "frame" is a place, family, place of work, nation, in short, individual's immediate social context. In Japan groups are formed on the basis of *frame*. The individual's identity is by the group he belongs to rather than by his attribute. Because the accent is on the individual's social context those who find themselves in one place (its variant could be family, region, company, government etc.) tend to establish strong social or human relations and they are oriented to finding, not only a sense of purpose in the group, but also fulfilment. Thus even when people of different age-groups, possessing different attributes come together, strong ties are established and fostered among them. The hallmarks of the groups are, therefore, co-operation, consensus, general harmony and team work. In fact in times of crisis the group acts as a cohesive football team, that can forestall the next move. Similarly frame grouping tends to foster a bond of unity between management and rank and file which Nakane identifies as the verticle principle of binding. And it is held that this, among other factors, is responsible for higher labour and industrial productivity. According to F. W. Taylor, who first (1911) formulated the principles of scientific management, the focus (of scientific management) should be on the individual. The Japanese have shown that in the modern industry, it is the group performance that matters. Also the bond of unity between the management and the workers has in a sense challenged the "scientific" industrial management of the West. The Japanese manager, according to Sapre (Economic Times, 25-5-1982) never adopts rigid work rule which can freeze productity, instead is considerate to the workers, informal in his approach and encourages their initiative. I was once startled to see the President of the Tokyo Gas Company having *Sake*

(wine) with his chauffer, which I was told was a daily practice since the chauffeur drives the master home late every evening from the place of work. In order to further strengthen the sense of belonging, the companies and management carefully plan welfare schemes and even "capture" recreational and group activities. It is this cementing of tradition with modernity that has proved to be the Japanese challenge to industrial relation of the Western type. Again, the same sense of belonging to group, the harmony and other characteristic of groupism, tend to make a worker identify more with the organization, specially the work organization than with his professional or occupational specialization. When in Tokyo (1980) I asked a young man what he was, he said he was 'from the Sony'. That was his manner of identifying himself. I then asked him *what* his profession was. He said he was an engineer. Now, it would never occur to me, when asked what I was, to say that 'I was from the Madras University. I would say I was a teacher, a professor. Earlier sociologists like Weber, Durkheim and Parsons have stressed the professional or occupational groupings as the major source group consciousness or belongingness for industrial societies. But this does not seem to be true of Japan.

A few other traditional psycho-cultural norms :

The concepts of *Ie* and *Ovabun-Kobun* are, as said earlier, the bed-rock of paternalism with which social, economic and even political managements are infused to an extent. A distinctive feature of Japanese management (industrial) is the paternalistic attitude towards labour. And this is largely due to the concepts of *Ie* and *Ovabun-kobun*. The essence of group consciousness is strongly expressed in the traditional concept of *Ie* (household management). What is significant about the concept is that the relationship within the group is held as more important than any other human relationship, which in them cultivates values such as loyalty, harmony etc. Also, because of the *Ovabun-kobun* (parent-child relationship), among others, the management tends to be responsive to the demands

of the workers. More often it comes naturally to them to assume the mantle of a protector, promoter and a well-wisher of the workers. The Head of the Company rarely behaves like a boss. In fact he is quite vague about his duties (not responsibilities). He is said to rely happily and fully on his subordinate in whom he has full trust and bestows the best care on him. There are certain qualities which are expected of a super-ordinate - best of parental care, which exacts the best from the subordinate, hard work, loyalty, sincerity, commitment etc. The leader and the workers merge fully with each other till they have no personal identity. Over a period of time such a worker emerges as a *Banto*, who wields great influence and invariably it is the *Banto* rather than the son of the proprietor of the company who is promoted to higher positions in the company. These factors build a set of attitudes towards the management i.e. loyalty, commitment etc. It is because of these, the Japanese trade unions are more enterprise unions than trade unions. This too tends to explain the limited resort to the instrument of strike.

The Japanese have a well-graded schemes of obligations and their reciprocals (Ruth Benedict, 1946). There are a set of obligations which a person receives and these form the basis of duties. Some of the reciprocals can never be fulfilled once for all, and have to be fulfilled continuously. One such duty is *Nimmu*, a duty to one's place of work. It is often held that it is because of this, among others, that the Japanese tend to be loyal, hard working.

These social values and norms i.e. groupism, paternalism etc. are still valid even though Japan has well-passed the stage of industrialization. And in the modern context when large scale organizations are becoming impersonal, these traditional norms seem to cushion off the excesses of industrial societies, social alienation or class antagonism.

At the political level :

Japan too, like many non-western countries, has adopted western institutions of government and since then there has

been considerable democratization of governmental and the political system. Yet there is a mixture of traditional value and western institutional systems. Of course, this is not special of Japan only. This is true of many countries including those of the West, which clearly proves the validity of Nakane's theory of social persistence (Chic Nakane, 1979). Here mention may be made of just one case of the mixture of tradition and modernity. The institution of political party, the manner of their founding and organization etc. are the same as in the West or elsewhere, but in their operation the basic social values motivate the formal structures of the political parties. Groupism as a phenomenon has affected the Japanese political parties, particularly the Liberal Democratic Party which has at least three dominant groups within it. Groupism is more positive, for though it promotes factions, it does not generate factionalism to the same extent as it does in India. Whereas factionalism proliferates political parties, groupism which is active in the political parties in Japan, does not lead to proliferation of political parties, for instead of breaking off from the parent party, the groups cling on to each other to sustain the party. As such the politics on the whole, is more pragmatic than idealogical.

Technology, Society and Man:

The Japanese have synthesized their traditional value system with the modern economic and technological developments in a remarkable manner; and it is said this is primarily due to their being a "technologically-minded" people. It took them just ten years to grasp and accept the Copernican theory which they learnt from the Dutch in the 17th century, whereas it took nearly a century in the West for the theory to take root because of religious objections. According to Michio Nagai, former Education Minister of Japan, this bent of mind is due to their secular outlook and traditionally strong respect which they have for nature. Similarly Japan's first imperial University, now the Tokyo University, established at the end of the 19th century, introduced not only the basic academic disciplines but

also established new faculties such as engineering and agriculture and, thus right from the beginning, laid stress on applied science and technology. Hence, they tended to follow the American universities, but the fact was they (Japanese) readily took over and departed from the scholarly traditions of the European universities. Though the Japanese responded to new innovations and technology, basically their attitude is tempered by the philosophy i.e. of reconciling 'Eastern morality and Western technology' implicit in the slogan viz. Eastern Spirit and Western means' which inspired the goals of the Restoration.

Certain popular practices :

The governmental, business or industrial organisations follow two procedures which are typically Japanese. These are *Nemawashi* and *Ringi Sei*. Nemawashi is a process of informal negotiation and persuasion among the concerned people, participating in the decision-making. Literally, it means 'binding the roots of a plant before pulling it out', appropriately refers to practice of broad consultations between the concerned parties before a decision is taken. Once the decision is taken, *Ringi-Sei* is established. One who initiates the plan receives formal consent from all the concerned. Once that is obtained, the *Ringi* is established and it climbs hierarchically to the top, each affixing his seal. During the American occupation, these two practices were abolished on the ground that they failed to fix the responsibility on any one person. But before long these were reintroduced. It proves that traditions are an integral part of a society and any change must have reference to its Organic context, i.e. the society.

Conclusion :

Formal structures of institutions, rules and regulations in the business or governmental organisations do not differ from those in the West. Where Japan differs is in her informal structures of values and norms which motivate the formal structures. The Japanese prefer groupism to excessive individualism, opt for consensus rather than adversary or

majority rule, co-operation and compromise rather than confrontation and, fair share rather than fair play. Japan has no doubt imported Western institutions and ideas and they are being grafted into the indigenous system, but with discriminate selectivity. Even when Western ideas of individualism, of inalienable rights, of social democracy, equality for women have been accepted, they are still alien in essence to the system, the Japanese still prefer duty to right, and loyalty to the institution they work for, family, the school etc. and, these are the seed-bed of all other loyalties. Her brand of modernity, therefore, does not fully square with the well-established model of democracy. Japan's experiment in modernization, therefore, is unique and her modernity follows especial track. Her process of modernity has tended to be symbiotic rather than symmetric, where traditions have been dovetailed to modernity in a special manner and the change is rooted in the soil.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked the leader and the audience present.

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III

REPORT OF SEMINARS

A seminar was conducted under the auspices of the Institute at 4-15 P.M. on Monday, the 20th April 1981 in Room No. 17, University Departmental Buildings, on "ARCHIVES AND HISTORY". The following is a report of the seminar.

Chairman: Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D.Litt., D.Phil (Oxon), Director, Institute of Traditional Cultures.

Leader: Thiru S. Singarajan, M.A., M.Litt., Director of Archives.

The Chairman introduced the leader and called upon him to speak:

a. Documentary Evidence

Thiru *S. Singarajan:* It is generally said that "the action of a Statesman is anticipatory, the solution of a politician is temporary, the description of a poet is imaginary but the verdict of an historian is declaratory". It is the documentary evidence or reference to the record, whether Archival or non Archival which naturally offers the authenticity to their declaration.

Archival collections may be private or public; they serve as the richest source for documentation. It is well known that it is the temple records which had helped in the reconstruction of the history of South India in the ancient, mediaeval or modern period of Indian history to a large extent. The Work of Dr. K. K. Pillay on Suchindram temple stands as a model to bring out specifically Local history. It must be known that the elaborate description of the practice of "Kaimukke" reveals how chastity of women are safeguarded in the Indian Society. These materials are preserved only on the plea of historians to consult them and reproduce them as proof of their findings.

Thus, if the archival collections are preserved for centuries in every country today and not destroyed, it is primarily the historians who are responsible for it. It is worthwhile to mention that without proper documentation there cannot be any authentic history. No doubt, Archives serve the primary purpose of supplying evidence to Government during the period of their currency. But more important they supply the basic material for historical research.

The Indian Historical Records Commission of late has laid emphasis on records available with mutts, churches, mosques or temples and the private collections in the hands of freedom fighters and public men as one of the primary source materials and considered as a corrective to the public records in Government custody. They are complementary and at the same time offer corroborative evidence to the official version of history. Large collections of private papers are nowadays handed over to the National Archives of India. There are Regional Committees for Survey of Historical Records in every State, who list and publish the existence of private records in the National Register of Records. Tamil Nadu Archives have also acquired many valuable collections and listed records in private custody. We have the additional source of the contemporary and oral evidence furnished by statesmen, politicians, social reformers and freedom fighters, which are conveniently utilised by foreign researchers in their dissertations.

A study of the revolutions in Europe would tell us clearly that history is a record of struggle of humanity in the social, political, economic, industrial, agricultural, educational or scientific fields. It is a struggle for the realisation of the rights of the people; it is a struggle for the rights and liberties of the people; rights, whether they are public or private. The Magna Carta, 1215, the Petition of Rights, 1642, the Bill of Rights, 1688, the Declaration of Rights, 1776 by the colonies which formed the United States of America, the Declaration of Rights of Man in France, 1789, the Rights of the Working Class in Russia after the October Revolution of 1917, the

Human rights in the United Nation's Charter, the Fundamental Rights enshrined in the Indian Constitution are some of the documents which would illustrate this. Revolutions themselves are exported from one country to another in the order stated above. After independence India is undergoing many silent revolutions as from 1909-1935 in every sphere of human activity and historians take a note of the emergence of the rights of the people involved. Centuries have passed by but the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau or Karl Marx still remain potent factors as their philosophies have been based on historical material.

b. The birth of Madras as the commercial capital of East India company

Tamil Nadu Archives is one of the richest store house of such historical information from 1649 when Francis Day landed in Madras. The name Chennapaṭṭinam has been derived from Chennappa Naick, Raja of Chandragiri, an obscure successor of the Raja of Vijayanagar on whose behalf the Firman dt. 22nd July 1649 was granted to Francis Day. By this grant, English gained 3½ square miles of territory on the sandy beach on the Marina for £5000 of annual quit rent. But it is from this dreary waste that the English built up an Indian Empire. Madras was declared as the commercial capital of the East India Company for all its trade between Bantang and Java in the East upto Maritus in the Middle East. Before long it developed into the political capital of the East India Company. It must be remembered that Clive with 300 Sepoys proceeded to Bengal from Madras. By the beginning of the 19th century Britain has laid the foundation for a mighty empire in the East, an empire to supplement loss of America where its principles of colonisation underwent a great eclipse. Madras remained the intellectual capital of India, though the political capital of the country was shifted to Bengal and later to Delhi. Madras is on the Coramandel coast and the word Coramandel, according to historians refers either to Chozhamaṇḍalam or Korkaimaṇḍalam. The name Madras marred our vision. The English ruled over the country for more than 300 years.

The Chief subjects of topical interest of the British Rule may be mentioned under the following heads:

a. Birth of Commercial activities of the East India Company in India with particular reference to Madras, 1649-1754.

b.(i) Growth and development of Madras as the Commercial Capital of the East India Company, 1754-1802. (ii) Resistance of the Local populations (iii) Commercial exploitation (iv) The Dubesis (v) The Nababs (vi) Life of the People in the 17th century (vii) Changing manners and customs.

c. The conflict of the English with Rival companies, 1700-1800

d. English and Native powers, 1750-1802

e. The Poligar Rebellion, 1758-1802

f. Defeat of Tippu, 1799

g. Permanent Settlement, 1802

h. Ryotwari and Munro, 1820-1840

i. (i) Dalhousie and the Doctrine of lapse, 1848-1858 (ii) Administration Reforms on the eve of the "Indian Mutiny".

j. South Indian and "the Great Rebellion", 1857.

k. Crown taking over responsibility, 1858.

l. (i) The Indian Councils' Act, 1861. (ii) The Birth of an Independent Judiciary, 1861.

m. Birth of Congress, 1884.

n. Tilak and Swaraj, 1904-1909.

o. The Councils' Act of 1909.

p. Mrs. Annie Besant and the Home Rule Movement, 1914-1919.

q. Dyarchy, 1919.

r. Act of 1935 and the Communal Award, 1934-1935,

s. The independent movements of the Congress, 1919–1947.

t. Transfer of power and partition of the country, 1942–1947.

u. National reconstruction programme in India, 1947–1981.

c. Classification of the Pre-Mutiny Records in Tamil Nadu Archives.

The Pre-Mutiny records admit broadly the following classification:

1. Consultations, 1672, 2. General Letters 3. Country Correspondences, 1753-1829 4. Special Correspondence and Minutes 5. Special Consultations 6. Consultations and Correspondence connected with outstations 7. Negotiations with Foreign Powers and Treaties 8. Committees on Finance 9. Committees and Proceedings as regards individuals 10. Miscellaneous Letters 11. Reports 12. Journals and Narratives 1757 13. Political Intelligence 14. Law, Justice and Police 15. Records respecting establishments 16. Cowle Books, Registers of grants, Land Customs etc. 17. Returns 18. Memorials and Petitions 19. Covenants and Oaths 20. General Standing Orders 21. Gazettes and Newspapers.

The Consultations comprise a full record of the formal consultations of the President and Council at Madras from the year 1672. The early proceedings are in the nature of chronicles. At that time all the events of the colony, commercial, political and administrative were recorded in the same series, though in later years some of the miscellaneous matters came to be recorded separately. The general Letters are letters interchanged between the Government of Madras and the Board of Directors in England. Those "to England" contain full information respecting the affairs of this Presidency and those "from England" contain the instructions of the Board of Directors and its approval or non-approval of the Government Proceedings. They are invested with considerable interest, besides possessing high literary value. The 'Country Correspondence" comprises the whole of the correspondence which passed between the Military and Political Departments with the native powers from

1753 to 1829 and its historical importance need not be dilated upon. The special correspondence and minutes contain correspondence with the French. The relationship with the French, Surajood Dowla, Monichand, Mir Jaffar, Omichand, Muhammad Ali and others can be gleaned from them. These special correspondence include correspondence on wars with Tippu, Land Settlement of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Poligar wars, Mysore and Maharatta affairs, Clive's defence of his administration, private debts of the carnatic Nawab and general administration of territories seized from the Dutch. Special consultations refer to special occurrences which are of historical value. Cession of the Northern Circars, Mr. Humphrey's deportation for having published revolutionary articles in the 'Herald of India' edited by him and his escape, collision between the Government and the Supreme Court, Madras Government Bank and expeditions and mutinies, correspondence connected with outstations and negotiations with foreign powers, need no description. 'Committees and Proceedings as regards individuals' throw light on corruption, indiscipline and mischief. The Miscellaneous letters contain letters of minor importance not recorded in the Consultation. The Reports contain information on troops, zamindaries, export, secrecy, botanical reports and the like. Journals and narratives are journals of Military Proceedings and other similar records and contain accounts of Revolution in Bengal (1757), narrative of voyages and an account on the Hindus. Political intelligence, Law, Justice and Police, Cowle Books, Registers of Grants, Land Customs, Memorials and Petitions, Covenants and oaths, General Standing Orders and Gazettes and Newspapers explain themselves.

d: Non Secretariat Records in Tamil Nadu Archives

Non-Secretariat Records are a good source. Materials: The records of the Board of Revenue, District Collectors, Mayor's Court, the Dutch Records, the Persian Records, the Danish Records, the Factory Records etc. are classified as non-Secretariat records. The records of the Board and the District Collectors give a mine of detailed information about the local conditions

and the day to day administration of the district which are not obtainable among the Secretariat records. The records of the Mayor's court give valuable information on the early administration of judicial practices in Madras. The Dutch occupied Cochin and the Danish Tranquebar in the Madras Presidency. The records left by them contain good material for authentic history. The Persian records mirror the internal administration and the correspondence of the Nawab of the Carnatic during the eighteenth century and as such contain good source material. Among the books registered at the office of the Registrar of Books which are in about 17 languages, a mine of published information relating to history, sociology, religion, science and politics can be collected for those interested in any particular subject, besides providing material for the study of linguistics and the growth of contemporary literature.

e. A description of the Post Mutiny Records

The Post Mutiny Records are arranged in Departmental and chronological order. The records of each department contain information on as many subjects as the department had dealt with. It is difficult to indicate them in a short note. But the names of the Departments themselves under which the records are classed would give a broad idea of the subjects themselves.

STACK I

(Secretariat Records)

	Departments	*Years*	
		From	*To*
1.	Public	1857	1975
2.	Petition	1857	1882
3.	Military	1857	1895
4.	Political	1857	1936
5.	Ecclesiastical	1857	1936
6.	Education	1861	1975
7.	Petition (Endt.)	1876	1885
8.	Medical	1916	1920
9.	Home (Miscellaneous)	1916	1921
10.	Revenue (Spl. War)	1919	1920
11.	Public Health	1921	1975

12.	Public (R.D.P.)	1957	1959
13.	Rural Development and Local Administration (Rural Development)	1959	1960

STACK II

1.	Revenue	1857	1975
2.	Separate Revenue	1915	1925
3.	Revenue Special	1918	1920
4.	Routine Revenue (R.R.)	1949	1950
5.	Development	1921	1953
6.	Industries, Labour and Co-operation	1953	1975
7.	Industries, Labour and Co-operation (Special)	1956	1960
8.	Food and Agriculture	1946	1975
9.	Food and Agriculture (Food Production)	1950	1956
10.	Firka Development	1947	1950
11.	Rural Welfare	1950	1953
12.	Law (Registration)	1921	1936

STACK III

1.	Judicial	1857	1922
2.	Judicial (Police)	1923	1925
3.	Judicial	1926	1928
4.	Public (Police)	1929	1936
5.	Judicial Magisterial	1923	1924
6.	Law General	1921	1936
7.	Home	1936	1975
8.	Home (Passport)	1946	1965
9.	Legislative	1862	1936
10.	Legal	1936	1953
11.	Law	1953	1975
12.	Finance	1857	1975
13.	Finance (Pension)	1857	1942
14.	Legislative Council (President's Orders)	1921	1936
15.	Finance (Code)	1926	1927
16.	Finance (Book Branch)	1901	1906

STACK IV

1.	Public Works	1857	1975
2.	Marine	1857	1936
3.	Railway	1870	1924
4.	Irrigation	1877	1926
5.	Finance (Local)	1885	1920
6.	Finance (Municipal)	1885	1920
7.	Local Administration	1920	1959
8.	Rural Development and Local Administration	1960	1975

STACK V

(Records of Pre-Mutiny period)

1.	Public	1670	1856
2.	Military	1752	1856
3.	Revenue	1774	1856
4.	Secret	1796	1850
5.	Judicial	1798	1856
6.	Political	1800	1856
7.	Financial	1811	1856
8.	Commercial	1815	1882
9.	Petition	1815	1882
10.	Law	1815	1856
11.	Foreign	1816	1846
12.	Ecclesiastical	1818	1856
13.	Marine	1838	1856
14.	Public Works	1843	1856
15.	Financial (Railway)	1853	1856

(Non Secretariat Records)

16.	Persian	—	—
17.	Dutch	1657	1825
18.	Danish	1779	1845
19.	Marathi (Modi)	—	—
20.	Madras Army	1761	1895
21.	Mayor's Court	1689	1858
22.	Madras Mint	1744	1876
23.	Coroner's Records	1853	1889
24.	Board of Revenue	1786	1858

(b) Heads of Departments: The records of the Board of Revenue are centralised in this office from 1786 down to the present with the exception of the records of the last ten years. So also are centralised the records of the Chief Conservator of Forests from 1919 down to the present with the exception of the records of the last ten years. All the records of the Board of Revenue and the Chief Conservator of Forests which are more than ten years are transferred to this office every year for permanent retention. These records are housed in Stack 6 as shown below.

STACK VI

	Departments	*Years*	
		From	*To*
1.	Board of Revenue (Consultation)	1786	1856
2.	Land Revenue Settlement	1857	1887
3.	Land Revenue	1887	1922
4.	Revenue Settlement	1887	1922
5.	Separate Revenue	1887	1924
6.	Excise	1925	1947
7.	Excise (Press Series)	1926	1951
		and	
		1954	1957
8.	Court of Wards	1885	1958
9.	Commercial Taxes	1939	1957
10.	Food Production	1949	1957
11.	Inam Commissioner's Disposals	1858	1954
12.	Inam Deputy Collector's Disposals	1858	1871
13.	Irrigation Development Board	1931	1956
14.	Settlement of Estates	1950	1956
15.	Forests	1886	1918
16.	Chief Conservator of Forests	1919	1958
17.	Fodder and Grazing Committee Proceedings	1938	1956
18.	Records relating to Travancore Cochin State	1921	1941
19.	Custodian of Evacuee property	1951	1952

The Chief topics of interest after Indian Independence may be mentioned under the following topics:

1. Agriculture - Technological and other improvements 2. Industries - Large Scale Industries 3. Industries - Small Scale Industries 4. State aid to Industries 5. Electricity and Roads 6. Taxation 7. Labour Welfare - Growth of 8. Labour Strikes - History of 9. Co-operation - Growth 10. Forests - Better utilisation and Administration of 11. Mineral resources of the State 12. Tenancy Reforms - History of 13. Ports and Harbours - Improvements 14. Administration - General-Red-tapism, Corruption etc. 15. Administration - Secretariat Administration 16. Social Legislation - Growth of (Notes on "The Madras Birds and Animal Sacrifices. Prohibition Act, 1950 will also come under this item). 17. Prison Reforms 18. Panchayats - Origin and development of 19. Municipalities - Origin and development of 20. Government and the Government Servants Conduct rules-Associations, Concessions etc., 21. Administration of Justice - Defects in working 22. Forgotten Chapters in Legislation - history of official as well as Non-Official bills that never became Acts. 23. Medical-Preventive side of medicine-Public health 24. Medical-Curative side of medicine - Origin and development of 25. Indigenous medicine - A historical review 26. Sanitation - Water supply and Drainage 27. Illiteracy - Removal of 28. Education - Elementary Education-Growth of 29. Education - Secondary 30. Education - Collegiate Education - Growth of 31. Technical Education - Growth of 32. Animal Husbandry - Origin and development 33. Ryotwari system-Its introduction - Its defects 34 Famines - Policies followed-Measures suggested for tiding over them 35 Madras City-Town Planning and other improvements 36. Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments-Government Policy 37. Police Administration in the City - Growth of 38. Police Administration in the district - growth of 39. District Boards - Origin and development of 40. Communism - Its rise - Communist Party Tactics-Measure to counteract it.

This vast mine of information may be fully exploited by historians to bring to light the vicissitudes of fortunes of

South India. The historians may work to make Tamil Nadu Archives a Research Centre to re-write the history of South East Asia and the Far East Asia as well. The Institute of Traditional Culture may rise to the occasion to offer a number of fellowships to researchers to bring out our tradition and preserve our culture in the light of the archival material available in Tamil Nadu Archives.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked the leader and other participants for their interesting speeches.

IV

REPORT OF SEMINARS

The Institute of Traditional Cultures, Madras-5, held a Symposium on "Temple Festivals" at 4-15 P.M. on Friday, the 30th July 1982 in Room No. 48, University Departmental Buildings, Madras-5 when the following persons read papers (on the topics indicated below) under the Chairmanship of Prof. P. Thirugnanasambandhan, M.A.,L.T., the Director of the Institute.

An audience of about 40 persons was present.

1.	Dr. S. Viswanathan, M.A., Ph.D., P. G. Professor, Department of Sanskrit, Vivekananda College, Madras-4.	Festivals in Śaiva Temples.
2.	Dr. A. Thiruvengadathan, M.A.,Ph.D., Professor of Sanskrit, D. G. Vaishnav College, Madras-106.	The Ritualistic and cultural aspects of festivals
3.	Dr. K. Kunjunni Raja, M.A.,Ph.D., Director, Adyar Library, Adyar, Madras-20.	Festivals in Temples in Kerala.
4.	Dr. S. P. Sabarathinam, M.A.,Ph.D., Professor of Tamil, D. G. Vaishnav College, Madras-106.	Festivals in Śaiva Temples.
5.	Vaikhanasa Thiru S. Gopalakrishnan, (Sub-Registrar of Assurances), 8, Samarapuri Mudali Street, Ponneri.	Vaiṣṇava Temple Festivals.

The Chairman briefly dwelt upon the traditions and customs followed in the celebration of various festivals in Śaiva and Vaishṇava temples and called upon the speakers to read their papers:

Dr. S. Viswanathan: Pūjās are of two kinds, Ātmārtha and Parārtha. Ātmārtha pūjā is intended to purify the Arcaka who performs parārtha pūjā. This Ātmārtha pūjā is being done by people who have been duly initiated by their Guru to perform Nitya pūjā in their home. The same is being performed by the priest in his house before reaching the temple for parārtha pūjā. This is one of the conditions laid down in the Ācārya Abhiṣeka of the priest who is to perform Ātmārtha pūjā daily. This pūjā should be performed by a person lying on the death bed and by persons suffering from illness by chanting mantras, whereas other rituals and ablutions etc. can be performed by the one who is to officiate in his place. Parārtha pūjā is being performed in the temple for the prosperity and welfare of the village or town and the people.

Mahotsava:

Utsavas: They are of three kinds:

1. Nityotsava - Festivals performed daily in the temple - Thiruvanandal i.e. Śiva is taken in a palanquin from the Palliyarai to Mūla Lingam in the early morning. At night i.e. Ardhajāma He is taken back to Palliyarai in a palanquin. Morning and evening Bali is offered in Navasandhi and this is called Nityotsava. The deity which is taken round is called Pradoṣa Nāthar.

2. Naimittikotsava – Yearly festival conducted in a particular month and Tithi. For example in Mayilai Kapālīśvarar temple Paṅguni Uttiram is celebrated in the month of Paṅguni (March–April) in the constellation 'Uttiram'.

3. Kāmyotsava is the one done at the will and pleasure of a person e.g. Vanabhojanam. Lord is taken to the grove where abhiṣeka is performed and for the whole day the Deity is worshipped and brought back in the night.

Vārotsavam: is the festival done on a particular day in a week. Worship done on each day has its appropriate fruit:

Sunday festival	—	attains the status of Rudra
Monday ,,	—	brings happiness
Tuesday ,,	—	gives Victory to the village
Wednesday ,,	—	attains success in every undertaking.
Thursday ,,	—	fosters education
Friday ,,	—	gives a lot of wealth
Saturday ,,	—	prevents premature death.

Festivals done on Somavāra Amāvāsyā is equivalent to the same done in Viṣṇu Puṇyakāla. If the star Ārudrā also falls on the same day it gives the fruit of one crore yāga.

Materials to be offered and the fruit of festivals done on Paurṇami of the *twelve months* are:

Meṣa	—	Marukkoḷundu	—	Abundant riches
Ṛṣabha	—	Sandal paste	—	Union with God Śiva
Mithuna	—	Three fruits	—	Success in undertaking
Karkaṭaka	—	Milk	—	Victory & holy merit
Simha	—	Sugar	—	Desires fulfilled
Kanni	—	Sweet Meats	—	Endless joy
Tulā	—	Cooked rice	—	all round prosperity
Vṛścika	—	Oil lamp	—	Obtains what is desired
Dhanus	—	Cow's ghee	—	worship at daybreak is equivalent to 1000 days worship
Makara	—	Honey	—	Long life and Wealth
Kumbha	—	Wollen Shawl & Hot water	—	Jñānam (Wisdom) and Health
Mina	—	Curd	—	Health

Uttarāyaṇam : Makara to Mithuna – the period of Day for the Gods.

Karkaṭaka to Dhanus – the period of Night for the Gods.

Special pūjas are performed at the commencement of these two half years in temples.

Utsava Months are of four kinds:

(1) Sāvanam (2) Cāndram (3) Nakṣatram (4) Sauram.

1. *Sāvanam:* The festival is conducted on occasions like the Coronation of Kings. 15th August, the day of Indian Independence is being celebrated as the Festival of Aruṇagirināthar at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai every year.

2. *Cāndram:* All Paurṇamis and Amāvāsyās, Ṛṣabha month Kṛishṇa Caturdaśi, Kumbha month Ṣaṣti, Mithuna month Aṣṭamī, are the culminating days of these festivals when the symbol of the idol is bathed in holy streams. This is called Tīrtha Vāri.

3. *Nakṣatram:* The conjunction of a particular star in each month is the occasion for the performance of this type of festival.

Thai - Pūsam; Māsi - Magham; Paṅguni - Uttiram; Chittirai - Chitrā; Vaikāsi - Viśākhā; Āni - Uttiram; Āḍi - Pūram; Āvaṇi - Mūlam; Puraṭṭāsi - Pūraṭṭāti; Aippasi - Aśvini / Oṇam; Kārttigai - Kṛttikā; Mārgaḷi - Tiruvātirai (Ārdrā).

4. *Sauram:* When the Sun reaches every Rāśi it is called Saṅkrānti. This holy occasion removes all evils.

Āgamas speak variously of festivals lasting for 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 21 days. The Utsavas classified according to *Kumāra Tantrā* are as follows:

1. Paitṛkam	—	11 days	With Dhvajārohaṇa Uttama
2. Saukhyam	—	9 days	
3. Śrīkaram	—	7 days	Madhyama
4. Bhautikam	—	5 days	Adhama Without Dhvajārohaṇa
5. Sāttvikam	—	3 days	
6. Śaivam	—	1 day	

One day festival is of two kinds: (1) Koṣaṇam - gives success in all undertakings; (2) Kevala-gives liberation. The first but not the second is done with Rakṣābandhana and Bherītāḍana.

18 days Festivals :

Gaṇeśa Yāga — 6 periods Skanda Yāga — 3 periods Bhakta Yāga — 3 periods (Sambandar, Appar Sundarar)		Completing 12 periods of worship with abhiṣeka.
Seventh day — Evening Eighth day — Morning & Evening Ninth day — Morning		4 periods Astra Yāga Abhiṣeka for Astra Rāja.
Ninth day Evening to 18th day Morning		Yāga pūjā to be performed

In this Floating Festival 'Uḍupārōpaṇam) is mentioned.

27 days Festival :

From the evening of the day of Dhvajārohaṇa to the end of morning of 13th day - Gaṇeśa Yāga to be performed and Lord Vighneśvara to be consecrated.

From 13th day morning to the morning of 18th day	—	Astra Yāga to be done and Abhiṣekam for Astra Deva at the end.
From the 18th day evening to morning of 27th day	—	Tīrthāṅkurārpaṇam to be done and Māha Yāga to be performed. Abhiṣeka with Tīrthavāri Kumbhams to the deities on the final day.

A particular type of dance is associated with each day of the festival signifying the several tattvas of Śaivism.

11 days Festival :

First Day	—	Prakṛti Dance	—	Associated with the first impure tattva.
Second Day	—	Iruvinai Dance	—	associated with good and bad deeds (karma).
Third Day	—	Mukkuṇa Dance	—	associated with three qualities of Sattva, rajas and tamas,

Fourth Day	— Antahkaraṇa Dance	— associated with four aspects of mind.
Fifth Day	— Pañcendriya Dance	— associated with five senses.
Sixth Day	— Kāmādi Dance	— associated with the six evil propensities, lust etc.
Seventh Day	— Saptakōṭi Mahā-mantra pada Dance	— associated with 7 crores of mahāmantras.
Eighth Day	— Vidyā Tattva and Āṇava Dance	— associated with 7 Vidyā Tattvas and the eternal impurity of the soul.
Ninth Day	— Tirōdhāyi Dance	— associated with the power of concealment.
Tenth Day	— Pērinbātīta Dance	— associated with supreme Bliss.
Eleventh Day	— Pati, Paśu, Pāśa Dance	— associated with three eternal principles of Lord, soul and world.

Pañcaparvas are: Pradoṣa in Śukla Pakṣa and Kṛṣṇa Pakṣa, Kṛttikā, Paurṇamī and Śukravāra.

Vasantotsava: In the month of Cittirai upto Citrā Paurṇamī this festival for Lord Śiva lasts for 10 days; the festival for Lord Subrahmaṇya extends upto Krittikā for 17 days. Deities are given complete rest for 27 days and they are propitiated to bestow prosperity on the world.

Pavitrotsava: This is a sort of Mini Kumbhābhiṣeka done yearly for the purification of deities and as prāyaścitta for all the loss or miscarriage of Mantra, Tantra and Kriyās.

The Āgamas speak about the significance of Gopura, Liṅga etc variously thus:–

(a) Stūpi – Gopuram — Sthūla Liṅgam
Śivaliṅgam — Sūkṣma Liṅgam
Balipīṭham — Bhadra Lingam

(b) Nandī – Paśu
Śivaliṅgam – Pati
Balipīṭham-Pāśam

The Kāraṇāgama refers to the significance of Flag Staff etc. :-

Flag Staff - (Dhvajastambha) — Pati
Rope entwining the Flag staff — Thiruvaruḷ Śakti
Cloth in Pīṭha — Paśu
Strand of Darbha grass — Pāśa.

The following kriyās are generally performed in a Mahotsava-

1. Anujñai: Vāstu Śānti, Mṛt Saṅgrahaṇa, Aṅkurārpaṇa, Bherītāḍana, Rakṣābandhana, Vṛṣabha Yāga, Astra Devatā, Vāhanam, Dhvajārohaṇam, Dhvaja Pīṭha Bali, Sandhyārohaṇa, Grāma Pradakṣiṇa, Gopura Dvāra Nīrājana, Yāgamaṇḍapa Pūjā, Aṣṭa Dik Bali, Thiru-kkalyāṇam; Kriyās, represent Sṛṣṭi or creation.

2. Vāhanotsava; Homa, Bali refer to Sthiti or Sustenance.

3. Pārivēṭṭai, Rathārohaṇa, Kṛṣṇagandha Arcana refer to Samhāra or destruction.

4. Cūrṇotsava, Tīrtham, Aṅkura Visarjana, Yāga Kumbhābhi-ṣeka, Dhvaja Avarohaṇam, Mauna Arcana, Rakṣābandhana Visarjana, Caṇḍa Yāga - refer to Tirobhava or concealment.

5. Satti Yātrā i.e. (Misunderstanding between Śiva and Pārvatī) Caṇḍeśvara Festival, Ācāryotsava refer to Anugraha or bestowal of Grace.

Śāmbhavi Dīkṣā :

Dīkṣā is a means by which the soul is relieved of Pāśa and Śiva Tattva is imparted by Śiva Śakti. Dīkṣā is a Kriyā. It is of three kinds:

1. Māntri - Kuṇḍa - Maṇḍala are put for the removal of delusion of the disciple.

2. Satti - Kuṇḍa etc. are imagined mentally and the pāśa of the disciple is removed.

3. Śāmbhavī or Vijñāna Dīkṣā: By looking or touching the disciple with the aid of Śivaśakti his pāśa is removed.

Utsava is a kind of Śāmbhavī Dīkṣā.

Here Lord Śiva bestows grace on the souls stationing himself in Maṇḍala etc. represented by Balināyaka etc. in the festival.

(1) Bali Nāyaka	—	Maṇḍala
(2) Astra Deva	—	Kumbha
(3) Somāskanda	—	Śivāgni
(4) Śivācārya	—	Guru
(5) All Souls	—	Śiṣyas.

Utsava is the Dīkṣā Kāla for all concerned with the temple worship.

In the process of offering worship five kinds of Upacāras are done. This is suggestive of the all pervasive nature of Lord Śiva in the five elements.

Pṛthvī (Earth)	—	Sandal paste, flowers, fruits, rice etc.
Āpaḥ (Water)	—	Water, Milk, Curd, Cloth etc.
Agni (Fire)	—	Gold, Gems, Light, Camphor, Ornaments etc.
Vāyu (Air)	—	Incense, Cāmara, Fans etc.
Ākāśa (Ether)	—	Bell, musical instruments, Stotras etc.

Festivals in honour of the four Śaiva Saints include procession of the images of Jñānasambandhar, Appar, Sundarar and Māṇikkavācakar.

Āvaṇi Aviṭṭam is the festival for the Brahmins when they renew the sacred threads and they begin the study of Vedas. For the deity in the temple this is called Pavitrotsava, a purificatory festival.

In the Tamil Nadu, Tamil Veda i.e. 12 Thirumuṛai is being worshipped in the First Sunday of Āvaṇi month when they are taken on an elephant. Sambandhar, Appar, Sundarar, Māṇikavācakar are taken to the proximity of Lord Naṭarāja where sacred Tamil Vedas (Tirumuṛais) are recited. This is the special feature in Kapālīśvarar Temple, Mylapore.

Festivals in a few important holy places:

Chidambaram: Twice a year 10 days festivals are performed one in the month of Āni and the other in Mārgaḷi. Lord Naṭarāja is the main Deity at Chidambaram, one of the Pañcabhūta sthalas, i.e. Ākāśa Kṣetra. Much lies in the secret i.e. 'Chidambara Rahasyam' which is being worshipped in a wall containing a string of Bilva Dalas made of Silver with gold coating.

Madurai: Āvaṇi Mūlam festival is celebrated in honour of Śiva who worked as a Labourer to the old lady Vandi who promised to offer him as wage pieces of rice cake. For dereliction of duty He received caning at the hand of the Pāṇḍya King.

Tanjore: Here the Bṛhadīśvarar Temple built by Rāja Rāja Chōḷa is a monumental building. He is called Thirumuṟaikaṇḍa Rāja Rāja Chōḷa. But for him the Thirumuṟais would not have been unearthed from Chidambaram.

Festivals reveal the culture of the people and they satisfy the tastes of all. People interested in hearing Rāja Vādya find it in the beginning; lovers of Nāgasvaram are entertained before the deity; people interested in hearing Veda pārāyaṇa accompany the persons chanting Vedas coming behind the deity. The sweet sacred Tēvāra goṣṭh radiates a peaceful atmosphere. One is able to meditate on God with form and without by listening to the sweet Tamil Veda. Singing Pañcapurāṇam viz. select songs from Tēvārams, Tiruvācakam Tiruvisaippā, Tirup-pallāṇḍu and Periya purāṇam is customary in Śiva Temples. Man gets spiritual uplift by these various aspects of the Festival. Children and the old get spiritual benefits on the solemn occasion. Artists like painters and garland makers thrive. Musicians and labourers find opportunities of employment. Social cohesion among the people of different strata is fostered. Besides causing the people get recharged with spirituality the festivals contribute to the colour and joy among them.

Dr. A. Thiruvengadathan:* Festivals are the spice of a Religion. Every creed or school of thought has a place for festivities and festivals. Even those who do not believe in any Religion are not averse to celebrating particular occasions at fixed periods year after year like the birth-day of a particular leader or the day on which a particular movement was commenced or had succeeded. Man being basically sociable and social functions being indicative of civilization the man who invented Religion also invented Festivals, where multitudes thronged.

The Temple Culture in South India and especially in Tamil Nad provides interesting and absorbing study not only for Religionists but to Anthropologists, Archaeologists, Epigraphists, Art Critics, Linguists, Political and Social Scientists as well. In South India, Temple has been the centre of all activities. In fact Agamic Temple Culture has a Dravidian or Proto Dravidian base.[1] In almost all sacred places, the temple is in the centre around which habitations developed and it was most prominent. Various benefactions in cash and kind are made to the temple in such a lavish way that it became the single richest institution in a given place. Initially the local people got attached to the central edifice for they gathered there for receiving their education, for reciting their prayers, for listening to a discourse, for witnessing a dance or drama or for discussing a social problem. In the Kuṭavolai system, even elections were conducted in temples. Initially the festive occasions must have been few and far between and these must have synchronised with the period of rest of the majority of people whose main preoccupation was Agriculture. The priestly class originally involved in Vedic rites and rituals turned to temple rituals. It is difficult to say when and how the Vedic rituals got accommodated with the Āgamic rituals. But it is a

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* Various Vaishṇava temples follow various customs necessitated by local traditions and conditions. An attempt is made in this paper to highlight the common features of the festivals in Vaishṇava temples of Tamil Nadu.

1. The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. IV; p. 445; The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture; Reprint. 1969.

fact that the modern Hindu rituals represent a mixture of Vedic ritualism, simple yogic practices and Upanishadic philosophy.[2]

In course of time Vedic rituals became minimal and Āgamic practice became dominant. The main reason for this change is to be found in the temple becoming more and more a centre of theological, philosophical and social activities. The Āgamic practice became acceptable to both the priests and the laity as it had a Vedic base.

The hold of the Āgamas on the temples in the South is far more pronounced than their hold on those of the North. The festivals in these temples are not many and varied as we have them in the South. Most of the festivals in the North India are connected with the sacred days like Holi, Akshaya tṛtīyā, Naraka caturdaśī (Dīpāvalī) Sankrāntis etc,. Kumbha mela and Ardhakumbhamela are festivals connected with solar movement. There is nothing much special about temple festivals there. Even though private worship and private celebrations of festivals are in practice a sort of congregational worship they are followed in a much organised manner in South India. It is pertinent to note that the Mānasikapūjāvidhi very much follows the Āgamic form of ritual worship available in temples. In this background let us have a glimpse of the colourful festivals in Vaishṇava temples.

Even though only 106 out of 108 Holy shrines belong to the terra firma many Vaishṇava temples are languishing for want of funds and public support. These Holy shrines have a special status as these are commemorated in the Hymns of the Āḷvārs. A few temples like those at Melkote and Mannārgudi are deemed as Holy shrines because a hymn was dedicated to each one of them by Rāmānuja and Maṇavāḷamāmuṇi.[3] Places like Sriperumpudur and Tirumazhisai have acquired greatness on account of their being birth places of Rāmānuja and Tirumaḷicai Āḷvār respectively. In most of these temples we

2. Ibid. pp. 447-8.
3. Tiruvāymoḷi I—1i, IV-6-i and IV-6-x.

find idols of gods and devotees and festivals held for these sanctified idols are determined by the temple's affluence or lack of it.

The Āgamas have prescribed ritualistic festivals and these are classified as Daily (nitya), Fortnightly (paksha), Monthly (māsa), Half yearly (ayana) and Yearly (samvatsara) Festivals. Apart from these, on special occasions like Renovation of a Temple festivals are recommended. It cannot be denied that there is much anthropomorphism in most of the rituals of worship like cleaning the teeth, bathing etc., of the deity. In the matter of worship the principle of 'Yadannaḥ puruṣo bhavati tadannās tasya devatāḥ' very well applies. In whatever manner a human being rejoices, that is projected on to his favourite deity also. The Spring Festival, the Float Festival and the Marriage Festival (held on the star Uttaram in the month of Panguni (March–April) are designed in this way. (The Āgamas recommend the Marriage Festival at the time of fresh installation of the deities). Therefore there is no limit to the festivals in Vaishṇava temples and a good many of the Festivals that we have now cannot be traced to the Āgamas. These Festivals can be broadly clssified as Ritualistic Festivals, Seasonal Festivals, Commemorative Festivals, Festivals in honour of Great Devotees and Miscellaneous Festivals. Generally a number of Vaishṇavite temples follow the schedule of festivals adopted in Srirangam Temple for it is regarded as The Temple (Kōyil).

Ritualistic Festival:

Three times a day the ritual worship is performed and the Deity is taken in a procession inside the temple. While offering Bali to the various minor gods a particular type of dance accompanied by a particular melody set to a specific tāla is performed. For example for the Dvārapālās, Caṇḍa and Pracaṇḍa in the first enclosure Vaijayantīnṛtta accompanied by the melody in Shaḍja set to Mallatāla is offered. For other Dvārapālas upto the fifth enclosure the same dance and the same tāla is recommended but the melody is Ṛshabha.

Even though in the Vaishṇava temples there are no specific monthly Festivals, every month some festival or other is celebrated. Especially in a rich temple frequented by a larger number of devotees every month is a month of festival but very often the festival is not occasioned by the month.

Normally the major festivals last for nine days comparable to the Christian Novena. In Mannargudi the major festival viz. Brahmotsava is celebrated for eighteen days. The Brahmotsava is associated with the birth-Star[4] and native month of the deity concerned. The Festival may start on the day of the Birth-Star or may conclude on that day. In Srirangam there are three Brahmotsavas. The main Brahmotsava is held in the Tamil month of Panguni (March-April) but this does not have any connection with the Birth-Star of Ranganātha viz. Revatī but connected to the native month. But the Brahmotsava called Viruppan Tirunāḷ celebrated in the month of Cittirai (April-May) coincides with Revatī. The Brahmotsava can be taken as an equivalent of a nine day sacrifice with the Avabhṛta or ritual Ablution (called Tīrthavāri) on the tenth day. On all days the ritual fire is tended in the Yāgaśālā where the processional deity is kept after the usual daily perigrinations. The officiating priest undergoes dīkshā on all the days like the sacrificial priest.

The procession of the gaily decorated deity placed on different mounts is of special significance in a Vaishṇava temple. These processions are meant to enable the sick, the infirm and those who cannot enter the temple have darśan of the deity. There is no fixed sequence for the use of various mounts (vāhanas) and various Vāishṇava temples adopt different sequences. The Vimāna, the Palanquin the Eagle (Garuḍa), Hanumān, Yāḷi (hybrid of lion and elephant), the Horse, the Elephant, the Solār disc with the Lunar disc on the reverse side and the Chariot are the common mounts. In some temples

4. Vishnu's birth-star—Śrāvaṇa (Tiruvōṇam); Varadarāja-Hasta; Ranganātha-Revati; Nammāḷvār-Viśākha; Rāmānuja-Ārdrā (Tiruvādirai) Vedānta Deśika-Śrāvaṇa; Maṇavāḷamāmuṇi-Mūlā (Mūlam).

the procession of the deity with or without the mount happens in both morning and evening while in some others the procession of the deity on the mount takes place only late in the evening.

The procession of the deity is similar to a royal procession. Buglers, drummers of various kinds, pipers and flag-carriers lead the procession. Caparisoned elephant, horse and bull with drums on their back come next. Then comes a large group of Śrīvaishṇavas reciting Divyaprabandha. The lavishly decorated deity carried under a mobile shamiana is followed by another group of Srivaishṇavas reciting the Veda and this group is followed by Bhajan groups. The Deity is stationed at fixed places where minimal worship is offered under endowments. On the last day either the representative deity (utsavabera) or the Main Deity has a ritual bath. The officiating priest also takes a similar bath. On the last day Dvādaśārādhana with twelve kinds of edibles, fruits etc., is performed. Āgamas recommend the Pushpayāga using all available scented flowers but this is being done only very rarely. On this day during the evening procession, importance is given to Vedic Recitation and loud music is avoided.

The Pavitrotsava lasting between one and fourteen days is a must for every Vaishṇava temple when the deities are all adorned with specially made garlands of silk threads which have been ritually sanctified. This is a strictly ritualistic festival avoiding all pomp. Performance of homas and recitation of Vedas (both Sanskrit and Tamil) receive great stress and this festival is enjoined for lapses in the performance of daily, occasional and optional festivals.[5] It is also believed to bring good to the temple personnel-both paid and honorary.[6] This festival shall be celebrated only in the Bright Fortnight and most of the Vaishṇava temples prefer to perform this festival in the month of Śrāvaṇa (July-August). The options are-with

5. Kriyākairavacandrikā (the Pāñcarātra manual) by Śrivarāhaguru—Ed. Svami Narayanacarya, p. 309 (1960?).

6. Ibid. pp. 312-15.

regard to month-Śrāvaṇa (July-August), Āshāḍha (June-July), Bhādrapada (August-September) and Āśvayuja (September-October), with regard to tithis-Prathamā, Ekādaśī, Dvādaśī, Trayodaśī and Pūrṇimā, and with regard to constellations-Pushya, Rohiṇī, Revatī, Bharaṇī, Hasta and Punarvasu. In practice the rainy months are avoided.

Another expiatory function is the offering of a huge quantity of food, mainly plain cooked rice or curd rice as Mahāśānti to make up for the unintentioned shortage of offerings in the year. This is known as (Periya) Tiruppāvāḍai as the food is spread on a long strip of cloth and this offering is made only in big temples. In some temples this function is known as Annakūṭa festival which is a re-enactment of the offering of food to the mountain Govardhana, an interesting anecdote in the Bhāgavata purāṇa.[7] After offering, the entire food is distributed to all the assembled devotees.

Other obligatory ritual festivals are collectively known as Pañcaparvotsava. These are performed every month on the first day of the month, the eleventh day of the Dark and Bright fortnights and New Moon and Full Moon days. Special purificatory ceremonies are performed on Saṅkrānti and days of Eclipse.

The Birth-Star of the Main Deity is celebrated every month with Ablution and Procession in a modest scale. The Annual celebration of this event is marked by elaborate worship in the above manner.

Seasonal Festivals :

The Vasantotsava or the spring festival is celebrated in the month of Caitra and Vaiśākha (April-July) for a period ranging from three to nine days. The Deity is stationed in the garden and special worship is offered. Things like cucumber are

7. At Śrīrangam it is held on the fourteenth day of the Bright Fortnight of Śrāvaṇa month. In some temples it is celebrated on the full moon day of Āśvayuja.

offered to the Deity. This festival is known as Davanotsavam in the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam area. On the full moon day of Citra month, Gajendra moksha or the liberation of a devout elephant from the clutches of a crocodile is celebrated uniformly in all Vaishṇava temples.[8] During Summer the processional deity is stationed outside the Sanctum Sanctorum in the Ardha maṇḍapa and pots containing leafy plants and plantains are arranged. Continuous fanning is provided by the devotees who also store water around the special maṇḍapa in which the deity is stationed. Sandal paste is applied to the stationary idol in this season. During rainy season not many festivals are conducted. Oil is applied to the stationary stone idols and the public are kept away from Sanctum during the month of Kārtikai (Nov-Dec). Only on the day of Vaikuṇṭha Ekādaśī (during December-January) the Sanctum will be opened, for the devotees.

During the winter season the deities are all clothed in wool and hot water is used for ritual Ablutions. The Float Festival is conducted with great pomp during the month of Māgha (Jan-Feb) in the Bright fortnight. This is the time when the tanks are full after copious rains. In the coastal places the deity is taken in a procession for a sea-bath in this month on the day of Maghā.

Commemorative Festivals :

A few festivals in Vaishṇava temples are introduced to commemorate certain events or personalities. Of the three Brahmotsavas in Srirangam temple, referred to already two, namely, Viruppan Tirunāḷ conducted in the month of Caitra and Bhūpati Tirunāḷ celebrated in the month of Pausha are in the nature of Commemorative festivals. The Viruppan Tirunāḷ is in honour of Viruppana Udayar son of Bukka I and brother of Harihara II (1377-1404) who donated a lot of gold by performing tulāpurusha ceremony.[9] Bhūpati Tirunāḷ must have

8. In some temples this is celebrated on the Āshāḍha pūrṇimā.

9. Koilolugu—p. 138. Tr. by V. N Hari Rao: Roçhouse & Sons Pvt. Ltd., Madras, 1961.

been introduced probably after eighteenth century for it does not find mention in Koiloḷugu. At Ālvārtirunagari two Brahmotsavas are celebrated for Nammāḷvār, one in the month of Māgha and another in Vaiśakha. The latter is Avatāra Utsava because it is the month of his birth while the former commemorates the date of the consecration of his idol which coincided with his birth star. Similarly in Kanchipuram the Brahmotsava is commenced twice. On the first day of the festival, in the evening, the officiating priest undergoes a second rakshā-bandhana commemorating the arrival of the original idol of Varadarāja from the Udayārpālayam forest while the festival was going on with substituted idols which is reminiscent of Muslim invasion. The Adhyayanotsava (Recitation Festival) which commemorates the conferment on Tamil Hymns a status on par with Sanskrit Veda commences with Tiruneṭuntāṇḍakam a work of Tirumangai Āḷvār as the festival was introduced at his request.[10] On a day prior to the commencement of the festival there is a festival for the recitation of Tiruneṭuntāṇḍakam which again is commemorative of Parāśara Bhaṭṭar registering victory over an Advaitin through Tiruneṭuntāṇḍakam. Periyāḷvār's eloquent establishment of the supremacy of Nārāyaṇa and the Lord subsequently favouring him by His appearance (seated on Garuḍa) are commemorated by a Garuḍasevā in the month of Śrāvaṇa (July–August). This one day festival is held in the Toṇḍamaṇḍalam area.

The Adhyayanotsava is an impressive festival celebrated by all Vaishṇava temples although it is of special importance in Srirangam, Āḷvārtirunagari and Srīvilliputtūr. Originally the idol of Nammāḷvār was brought from Āḷvārtirunagari to Srirangam and in his presence the festival was conducted.[11] Later on the laborious practice of carrying the idol over such a long distance was abandoned and the festival was celebrated independently

10. Ibid. pp. 9-11 and 33-37.
(Also see the paper on Tamil Movement in Śrīvaishṇavism by Dr. A. Thiruvengadathan, Kuppuswami Sastri Centenary Celebrations. Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute, Madras-4).

11. Ibid. pp. 9-11.

in these two places. Gradually this festival was adopted by all the Vaishṇava temples considering the importance attached to this unique festival lasting for twenty days.

The first part of this festival running for ten days is known as Tirumoḷi Tirunāḷ and the second part with an equal duration is known as Tiruvāymoḷi Tirunāl. The Tirumoḷi Tirunāḷ is devoted to three thousand hymns revealed by eleven Āḷvārs and the Tiruvāymoḷi Tirunāḷ is exclusively devoted to Tiruvāymoḷi by Nammāḷvār. Both learned scholars as well as laymen have their own attraction in this festival. As mentioned earlier the temples at Śrīrangam, Āḷvārtirunagari and Srīvilliputtūr are able to celebrate this festival with much eclat through the service of a class of reciters called Arayars. These are highly respected as they happen to be the descendants of Nāthamuni and they enjoy special honours in these temples. Evidences are there to show that many temples had their own Arayars but this institution disappeared in the temples except those mentioned above, in course of time.[12] The Arayars wear a special head dress (a conical cap with the religious insignia) and sing individually or in groups of four or five to the accompaniment of cymbals and sometimes a maddalam. They recite portions of commentaries on Divya Prabandha adapted by their ancestors and known as Tampirāṉpaḍi. For certain specified hymns, they provide Abhinaya. Even incidents like Rāvaṇavadha are enacted without the paraphernalia of a stage. The Arayars are addressed as Viṇṇappam Ceivār. They act as mediators in the festival of Praṇayakalaha viz. a sportive quarrel between the Lord and the Goddess. The Amṛtamathana episode and Muttukuṛi, the Goddess-Heroine consulting a gypsy-sooth sayer who draws circles in pearls collected in a platter attract large crowds. In Śrīvilliputtūr actual pearls are used while in the temple at Āḷvārtirunagari rice is used instead of pearls. The lay public are interested in witnessing the Lord made-up differently on

12. For more information on Arayar Institution see the article by A. Thiruvengadathan, Nellai Sangeeta Sabha Annual, 1961.

different days with lavish jewellery. During Tirumoḷi Tirunāḷ during nights the Lord is dressed as Rāma or Kṛshṇa doing various acts. These decorations have a bearing on the text of Divya Prabandha recited on the respective days. While in other temples only one such show is arranged at Ālvārtirunagari two shows known as Mudal Tirukkōlam and Iraṇḍām Tirukkōlam are arranged.

The Tiruvāymoḷi Tirunāḷ is a more solemn festival. In this festival also singing, recitation of portions of commentaries form an integral part. Nammāḷvār's reaching the holy feet of the Lord in Vaikuṇṭha and his return to the earth thanks to the prayers of the people are enacted in a moving manner on the last day. The Arayars do service on ordinary days as well as festival days.*

In all the festivals in Vaishṇava temples, a lot of importance is given to the recitation of Divya Prabandha by groups of Srivaishṇavas.

Festivals in honour of Great Devotees :

The early Vaishṇava Āgamas were concerned with the idol-making and worship of Vishṇu and His aspects. We find this provision extended to the Great Devotees or Saints called Bhaktabimbas. The Āgama works like Vishṇutilakasaṁhitā, Vishṇutattvasaṁhitā, Aniruddhasaṁhitā, Īśvarasaṁhitā and Vishṇutantra refer to Bhaktabimbas namely those of Āḷvārs and give directions for making their idols. The Tamil fervour went to such an extent as to consecrate the idols of the Āḷwārs in the temples for they (Āḷvārs) gave a new turn to Indian Philosophy by amalgamating Religion with Philosophy and by introducing Tamil in the language of worship. Naturally much enthusiasm is shown in Vaishṇava temples. The monthly birth-days and the Annual Birth days of the Āḷvārs

* It is very sad to note that the Arayars are not adequately paid. It is the honours that go with their position and the pressure of the devotees but not the lure of money that keep them to their honoured profession.

are celebrated in the same scale as that of the Main deity, sometimes in a larger scale especially in the Birth-places of the Āḷvārs. The Adhyayanotsava popularly known as Āḷvār festival has been already dealt with. Various Vāhanas (mounts) and ritual Ablutions are adopted as in the case of the Main Deity. Āḷvārs enjoy precedence over the Main Deity in their birth places.

What applies to Āḷvārs applies to the Ācāryas starting from Nāthamuni. The Āḷvārs laid the foundation for popular Vaishṇavism and the Ācāryas wrote profuse commentaries on them and thereby propagated the Religion among the classes and masses. Naturally they deserved a place of honour in the temples. Idols of these Ācaryas are consecrated in almost all Vaishṇava temples and festivals are conducted in honour of these Ācāryas as well. We have separate shrines for these Ācāryas. The temple of Rāmānuja at Śrīperumpudūr, the temple of Vedānta Deśika at Tūppul (near Kāñci) and the temple of Maṇavāḷamāmuṇi at Āḷvārtirunagari are too well known to need any elaboration. In the temple of Nammāḷvār at Āḷvārtirunagari and in the temple of Rāmānuja at Śrīperumpudūr, Dhvajastambha is found at the entrance apart from another Dhvajastambha for the Main Deity. For these Saints all rituals commencing from Ankurārpaṇa and Dhvjārohaṇa are performed as enjoined in the respective Āgamas. Major and minor festivals using various vāhanas are performed.

Miscellaneous Festivals :

There are any number of festivals in Vaishṇava temples and a good many of them are performed to satisfy the popular appeal and to provide opportunities for people to mingle and thereby maintain a cohesion. The purāṇic ideas got mixed up with āgamic rituals in course of time. The Navarātra festival when the idols of the God and Goddess are gaily decorated and taken around the enclosures of the temple also provides an opportunity for Musicians, Dancers and Discoursers. Parivēṭṭai (the Lord riding on a horse on a hunting expedition) is celebrated twice in the year i.e. on the day following

Makara Saṅkrānti and on the Vijayadaśami day when studies are commenced and recommenced for sure success. Sometime ago in some temples the ear of a lamb or a goat was slightly cut at the time of the Lord's Parivēṭṭai, symbolising the hunting of an animal. Now this practice is discarded. On the Dīpāvali day the deities are adorned with new clothes. The star Kṛittikā in the month of Kārttika is celebrated with lighting of numerous oil lamps and a bonfire with crackers. Śrījayanti or the Birth Day of Kṛshṇa in the month of Śrāvaṇa is a popular festival. Uṛiyaḍi or catching hold of a bundle of edibles and a little cash suspended and operated through a pully by means of a rope and climbing a slippery post to catch hold of a stake are the favourite sports held in the presence of the Lord. A number of Yādava youths take part in this divine merriment. Water syringes are used on these occasions to prevent the contenders from reaching the target. In the month of Āni (Jyeshṭha-June-July) on the star Jyeshṭhā repairs to the personal ornaments and the golden corslet of the Deities are undertaken in the presence of responsible people and goldsmiths. Special worship is offered at the end. This function has a special significance as the devotees know beforehand that the repairs are to be undertaken on a particular day and it is possible to prevent mischief. Nowadays in many temples, on the first of January every year special pūjās are offered and the Stationary Deity is specially decorated with flowers. Huge crowds throng the temple on the New Year Day to receive divine blessings. This particular festival is celebrated in deference to the popular demand even though there is no Āgamic sanction.

The Cultural side of the Festivals :

In old days the temple was catering to all the needs of man. When Religion, Philosophy, Literature, Sculpture and Fine Arts were under the care of the temple they were not tampered with unscrupulously since there was a divinity attached to them. This is how we have come to possess a rich cultural heritage. Every form of Art was dedicated to God. The Fine Arts are part of the rituals. Sixteen types of nṛtta like

Vaijayantī, Sarvamaṅgalā, Pṛshṭakuṭṭima, Vishṇukrānta, Svastika etc., ten kinds of talas like Malla, Bhadra, Ḍhakkarī, Bhṛṅgiṇī etc., and twelve kinds of rāgas (melody) like Varāṭi, Śālapāṇi, Kolli, Garuḍa gāndhāri etc., are recommended while offering Bali at various enclosures for various ancillary gods. Different kinds of musical instruments were in use, of which pipe and a few varieties of drums have survived. In some big Vaishṇava temples there are evidences of provision for singers. At Āḻvārtirunagari, the Sāttādamudalis, the non-brahmin Śrīvaishṇavas are assigned the service of singing. Originally Viṇṇappam ceivārs were doing this service.[13] At Srirangam; at the close of the night worship on certain days and every morning during Viśvarūpa, Viṇā is being played. By means of simple dance the Arayars have been delighting the hearts of the devotees while interpreting the import of certain hymns from Divya-Prabandha. There were temple dancers or Devadāsis whose duty it was to offer Ghaṭadīpa to the accompaniment of dance. On special occasions they did Abhinaya for certain songs (not necessarily from Divya Prabandha) bearing on Kṛshṇa. The Arayars have been using simple mudrās to indicate common ideas. Similarly the priests are using mudrās many of which are traceable to Nāṭyaśāstra. Apart from the symbolic meaning of the mudrās, the whole process when done according to procedure, appears colourful. The pipers who are maintained by Vishṇu temples are accustomed to certain regimen. The music suits the occasion. From the music as well as from the sound of drums one can decide even from a distance the nature of worship.[14] Apart from the simple enactment of scenes from the Rāmāyaṇa and the traditional lore by the Arayars, in certain temples in far south[15] on the night of Kaiśika Ekādaśī

13. Koiloḻugu, pp. 37-38 and 78-79.

14. At Āḻvārtirunagari both the singers and the pipers use the Tamil songs by one Alaṁk ra Aiyangar. These are in praise of Nammāḻvār. The use of these songs at the time of various rituals have been standardised with the result that a frequent visitor to that temple can easily identity the part of the ritual by simply listening to the music.

15. At Tirukkuruṅkuḍi and Āḻvārtirunagari (both Tirunelveli Dist.),

in the month of Kārttikai (Nov-Dec) the Kaiśika Purāṇa was used to be presented in the form of drama by Devadāsis. This drama is in the form of an encounter between an ogre and a pious devotee of low caste, by name Nampāḍuvāṉ whose devotion to his favourite god Vaishṇavanambi and his adherence to truth enabled him to finally escape from the ogre. The participants used to live a regulated life, subsisting on the food offered by the temple and remaining pure for at least three days prior to the enactment. The headgear meant for the ogre used to be offered worship before placing it on the actor. It is believed that the headgear retains certain divine power. The play used to go on till the early hours of the morning. Now this enactment is given up, but the purāṇa is read out during daytime.

Conclusion: The out and out ritualistic worship in Vishṇu temples came to accommodate the aspirations of an expanding religion. While retaining the rituals to the barest minimum, things that would interest all men and women belonging to the lower echelons of society were introduced. The decorations to the deity illustrating the Purāṇic and Prabandhic themes are aimed at educating the masses. The mantrapushpa which is recited by elderly Srivaishṇavas after the Deity is taken to Alaṁkārāsana select passages from Vedas, Dharmaśāstra, Itihāsas, Purāṇas etc., was later amended to accommodate a Tamil Hymn from Mudal Tiruvandādi. Tamil Prabandhas began to exercise greater influence in Vishṇu temples with the result the priests especially those in the Vaikhānasa tradition did not relish this inroad by the Tamil Veda. Even to this day their attitude to Āḷvārs and Tamil Prabandha has not completely changed. The main purpose behind these festivals in Vishṇu temples has been to provide opportunities for the devotees to gather and for the recitation of Divya Prabandha. A solemn festival is celebrated in some temples (preferably in those of the Ācāryas) for the recitation of Nampiḷḷai's commentery on Tiruvāymoḷi called Īḍu and this festival goes by the name Īḍu Utsavam. This is a pointer to the increasing hold of Tamil Prabandhas on Vaishṇava temples. The Āḷvārs themselves have

expressed that the very purpose of the eyes is to feast on the congregation of true devotees of Śrī Nārāyaṇa.[16] Kamban quips in his Saṭhakoparandādi (this text is recited at Āḷvārtirunagari by the priests on the last day of the Adhyayanotsava) thus:

அந்தமிலா மறையாயிரத் தாழ்ந்தவரும் பொருளை
செந்தமிழாகத் திருத்திலனேல்—நிலத் தேவர்களும்
தந்தம் விழாவுமழகுமென்னும் தமிழார் கவியின்
பந்தம் விழாவொழுகும் குருகூர் வந்தபண்ணவனே.

(V. 14)

'What would happen to the Priests and their Festivals had not the Saint Nammāḷvār come to Kurukūr and rendered the inner meaning of the eternal Vedas into Tamil'

We have to say 'Amen' to the remark of Kamban.

Dr. K. Kunjunni Raja: Kerala is a land of temples dedicated to different Gods and goddesses. In the earlier times, the temples formed the nucleus of cultural activities in their varied aspects - aesthetic, social, religious, intellectual, philosophical and the like. Though the daily rituals are significant the seasonal festivals like Utsavam, Pūram, Vela and Tālappoli are the occusions which bring together the people without any distinction of age, economical status, caste or intellectual attainment. Tantrasamuccaya and Sepasamuccaya give the detailed account of temple festivals.

One of the most ancient temple festivals of Kerala is the Āṛāṭṭupuzha Pūram where the gods and goddesses of as many as 108 temples are brought in procession for the memorable meet. The famous Pūram at Cherpu, a nearby place, is a prelude to it and the famous Trichur Pūram follows it. The manner in which these celebrations cater to the aesthetic enjoyment of the people is one to be experienced.

There are two types of festivals - Dhvajādi and Paṭahādi. The first starts with Ankurāvāpa etc. and the other starts witu the beating of the drum. In certain festivals the deity is takeh

16. Tiruvāymoḷi II-3-xi and Perumāḷ Tirumoḷi 2-i.

in procession with musical accompaniments to the different parts of the village so that the devotees can offer their special worship at their respective places. In almost all these caparisoned elephants play an important role. The festivals extend to different periods of time - one day, three days, seven days etc. The final day is invariably marked by fire works. The types of musical instruments played at the time of the processions vary. Nowadays Pañcavādyam is more prominent. The two types of mela Paṇḍi and Pañcāvi have Cheṇḍa as the main instrument played. Any Utsavam which has caparisoned elephants forming part of it will have the other accompaniments like tall colourful ornamental umbrellas, Ālavaṭṭam, Veñchāmaram, rows of Kuttuviḷakku, fire-bands etc.

There are not many chariot festivals in Kerala - though they are conducted at Palghat and other places.

The Devi temples have usually the Vila festival preceded by Kaḷamezhuttu and Pāṭṭu.

During the special festival of Tāluppoli at Cranganore young girls accompany the goddess with specially prepared Tāḷams.

The Pāṭṭu (Song festival) of Bhagavati, as the Mother Goddess in Kerala is called, illustrates how the temple administrator and servant, the priest, drummer and dancer and the commonfolk are involved in the festival.

In the Kālikāvu temple of Kerala the temple administrator (Ūrāḷan) inaugurates the festival by offering a piece of red silk to the 'kurup' who lights a lamp, spreads out the cloth (kūra iḍal) and draws the figure of the Goddess with rice flour of five colours on the ground. This is accompanied by songs in praise of the Goddess. The brahmin priest places at the head of the figure drawn a stool on which he places certain symbols of the Goddess and by its side a mirror, a red silk skirt and a sword. Then he performs worship to a lamp placed at the bottom of the figure. There is a procession around the temple

in which Velichapāds and drummers take part. They offer rice to the bhūtagaṇas and this is called 'ari erital'.

The Nāyar women who follow in the procession offer rice, cocoanuts etc. in a brass plate (tāḷam) with lamps of cocoanut halves. These are then distributed to the Velichapāds. Then the Velichapād efface the rice flour figure of the Goddess and the rice flour is distributed as 'prasādam' to the people assembled there. The Velichapād now performs a sword dance when the Goddess expresses her satisfaction through him as medium. We find in this ritual festival how the entire community whether high or low in the social hierarchy mingle and integrate themselves and how art and ritual go hand in hand.

The details of the Aṣṭami festival at Vaikkom in honour of Lord Śiva are graphically described by Melpattūr Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa in his Aṣṭami campū.

All the festivals are invariably followed by cultural programmes like Music, Dance etc. nowadays in addition to the customary Kathakali, Ottam tuḷḷal and Pāṭhakam performances.

Dr. S. P. Sabarathinam: Festivals, with regard to Śaivism, are the spiritual conduits designed to realise and reach the place of Eternity. Sekkiḻar in his great and immortal epic *Periya Purāṇam,* while narrating the unparalleled event of infusing the soul into the ashes of Pūmpāvai by St. Thirugñāna Sambandhar, states that those who are born on earth have two-fold divine purposes-one being the feeding of devotees of Lord Śiva and the other participating and rejoicing in the festivals conducted in Śaiva temples [1] Feeding and festival are thus held in the highest esteem in Śaivism. It is clear that both these activities, namely feeding and festival, are deeply rooted in divine love and devotion that break through all limitations and trivialities. Since feeding itself is considered to be one of the important events that take place in the course of a festival, it goes without

1. Periya Purāṇam, verse: 2990.

saying that festival ranks a higher place among the means of release provided by Śaivism.

For Śaivism, festival is not a mere merry-making event. It is more a *sādhana* promising rich accomplishments and release than a periodical performance of special importance. Śrī Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha, in his commentary on the *Mokṣakārika* declares that Śaivism (Siddhānta) is the religion which provides the simplest means to the attainment of the highest goal. As such, one of the simplest means being offered by Śaivism is festival.

Meaning of the term 'utsava'

The *Śivāgamas* etymologically explain the meaning of the term 'utsava' in different ways. The *Kumāra Tantra,* which is supposed to be one of the *Upāgamas* pertaining to the *Lalitāgama,* interprets the term as follows:

> "The three-lettered term 'utsava' is indicative of the three-fold cosmic functions - *ut* denoting creation, *sa* implying protection and *va* connoting annihilation".[2]

The *Ajitāgama* explains the term *utsava* in a different way. It states that *sava* means auspicious and that which conduces all the living beings to happiness and *ut* means productive. Therefore *utsava* means that which accomplishes auspicious effects and that which leads to happiness.[3] Other connotations given in the Āgamic texts are. (i) that which removes misery, (ii) that which extricates souls from bondage, (iii) the unique sacrifice or that from which a sacrifice comes into being, (iv) that which accomplishes enjoyments (*bhoga*) and release (*mukti*) and (v) the principal five-fold cosmic functions.

Varieties of Festivals :

Festivals conducted in Śaiva-temples are grouped in three different ways. They are daily festival (*nityotsava*), occassional

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2. "utsaveti trivarṇoyaṁ sṛṣṭisthityanta saṁjñakam"
— *Kumāra Tantra* : Ch. 13.

3. savah kalyānamityuktam sarvajantu sukhāvaham
udbhūtas tu savo yasmāt tasmāt utsava ucyate
— *Ajitāgama* :

festival (*naimittika*) and optional festival (*kāmya*). Daily festival denotes the activities done at the termination of daily liturgical and routine worship. Festivals done occasionally on a certain lunar day and asterism are called *naimittika*. Festivals done according to the desire of devotees, having in mind a motive of gaining certain purposes are called *kāmya*.

Occasional festival is of many kinds such as weekly-festival (*vārotsava*), fort-nightly festival (*pakṣotsava*), monthly festival (*māsotsava*) and yearly festival (*varṣotsava*). The *Kumāra Tantra* classifies *naimittika* into three, monthly festival, grand festival (*mahotsava*) and festival of devotees (*bhaktotsava*).[4] According to the *Kāmikāgama*, *Kāraṇāgama* and other *Mūlāgamas*, *bhaktotsava* means the festival done to the devotees (saints) installed in a temple. But strangely enough, the *Kumāra Tantra* explains it as the festival done by the devotees.

> "bhaktyā puṇya dine bhaktaiḥ kriya te yas sa utsavaḥ"
>
> – *Kumāra tantra*: 13 : 7

The three kinds of commencement of festivals :

The Āgamic scriptures set forth that Śaiva festivals are begun in three different ways– (i) preceded by flag-hoisting (*dhvajārohaṇa pūrvaka*), (ii) preceded by drum-beats (*bherī tāḍana pūrvaka*) and (iii) preceded by germination of seeds (*aṅkurārpaṇa pūrvaka*). Each one of these commencements is of the nature of yielding a particular propitious effect.

The *Kāraṇāgama* asserts (141 : II, 3, 4) :

> " The festival preceded by *ankurārpaṇa* is of the nature of yielding all kinds of prosperity and wealth ; that preceded by *bherī tāḍana* is conducive to the delight of all gods; that preceded by *dhvajārohaṇa* is of the nature of leading all the living beings to happiness."

The following Āgamic statements in the '*Mahotsava paddhati* of Sri Aghora Śivācārya to bring out the significance of weekly-festival (P. 61)

4. *Kumāra Tantra*, Ch. 13.

"Festival done on Sunday will take the devotee to the place of Rudra and it will grant a healthy life; Monday-festival is productive of happiness; Tuesday-festival will bring about victory in battle field; Wednesday-festival is for the accomplishment of all desires; Thursday-festival is for the attainment of holy scriptural knowledge. Friday-festival will yield great wealth and Saturday-festival is for the cessation of untimely and accidental death".

The greatness of mahotsava :

The chapter on *mahotsava* is dealt with elaborately in all the *Śivāgamas*. Each *Śivāgama* has got its own way of explaining and differentiating the grand festival. The *Rauravāgama* enumerates five kinds of *mahotsava.*[5] According to the *Kumāra Tantra, mahotsava* is of six kinds. The *Kāraṇāgama, Sūkṣmāgama, Ajitāgama, Dīptāgama* and *Yogajāgama* give an account of nine kinds of mahotsava. The *Kāmikāgama,* the first and foremost of the Śivāgamic corpus, states twelve kinds of *mahotsava*.

The grand festival conducted in one day is called Śaiva and it is for the gratification of Lord Śiva; *mahotsava* conducted in three days is called *Gauṇa* and it is for the protection of village or city in which the temple is situated. The *Bhautika mahotsava* is celebrated in five days for the protection of five gross-elements. The *Bhauvana mahotsava* is celebrated in seven days for the protection of all the worlds distributed over thirty-six tattvas from *pṛthivī* to *Nāda*. The nine day festival called *Daivika* or Śākta is for the delight and favour of Śiva-Śakti. *Paitṛka* or *Raudra mahotsava* is conducted in eleven days for the attainment of supreme Brahman-knowledge. The *kaumāra mahotsava* which lasts for thirteen days is for the divine presence of all gods. The fifteen-day festival known as *Sāvitra* is for the happiness of all the living beings. The *Cāndra mahotsava,* celebrated through seventeen days is for the nourishment of people. The nineteen-day festival is for the

5. *Rauravāgama, Kriyā pāda,* Ch. 18.

release of bound souls. And the *mahotsava,* known as *Saura,* is celebrated in twenty-one days for the favour and delight of all deities governing the village or city.[6]

Generally, in a *mahotsava,* the following eighteen events take place in due order:

1. Vṛṣa yāga	10. Nīrājana
2. Dhvajārohaṇa	11. Kautuka bandhana
3. Bheri tāḍana	12. Tīrtha saṅgraha
4. Aṅkurārpaṇa	13. Cūrṇotsava
5. Yāga pūjā	14. Tīrthotsava
6. Astra yāga	15. Dhvaja-avarohaṇa
7. Bali dāna	16. Snapana
8. Yānakrama	17. Vivāha
9. Pariveṣa	18. Bhaktotsava

These events have been marshalled according to the Kāmikāgama. The Vijayāgama furnishes an account of twenty events. To explain vividly the significance of each event is out of the scope of this account and only some of these events are explained here.

About *aṅkurārpaṇa,* it is said in *Kāraṇāgama,* Ch. 141 : 86 'the activity done without *aṅkurārpaṇa* will be futile.'

The benefit to be derived from *dhvajārohaṇa* is explained in the *Kāraṇāgama* (Ch. 141).

Clouds will yield showers of rain in due time; prosperity is caused for the country; the ruler will be victorious; the evil effects of all kinds of sins will wither away; cows will yield abundant milk.

About *bali-dāna,* it is said in the *Suprabhedāgama* (Ch. 13)-

Even at the very sound of the word '*bali*', all the evil forces like *yakṣa, rākṣasa, piśāca, bhūta, nāga* etc. go out of the sacred place.

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6. See the *Mahotsava paddhati* of Aghora Śivāçārya and the *Kāraṇāgama* Ch. 141.

The metaphysical bearing of Śiva-mahotsava :

The *Mṛgendrāgama* states that only for the benefit of souls fettered by bonds, only for their redemption from the entanglement, Lord Śiva engages Himself in five-fold cosmic operations-creation, protection, destruction, obscuration and grace.[7]

As already stated, *utsava* denotes the *pañcakṛtya* of Lord Śiva. Out of the eighteen events that take place in due order during the course of a *mahotsava, aṅkurārpaṇa, dhvajārohaṇa, bherī tāḍana, Vṛṣayāga yāga pūjā, kautuka bandhana, nirājana* and *vivāha* denote the creative activity of the Lord; the procession of *utsavabhera* after mounting it daily on a particular vehicle (*yānakrama*), oblations (*bali dāna*), *tīrtha saṅgraha, tīrthotsava* and snapana represent the protective activity of the Lord; *astra yāga* and *cūrṇotsava* symbolise the destructive activity of the Lord; *pariveṣa*, and *dhvaja avarohaṇa* indicate the function of obscuration and *bhaktotsava* represents the function of Grace.[8]

Another important significance of *mahotsava* is that the period during which the grand festival is celebrated is deemed to be a highly auspicious period for initiation (*dīkṣa*) for all kinds of souls. *Dīkṣā* is that which brings about Śivatva which consists in attaining omniscience and omnipotence[9] and which brings to naught all the evil effects of *karmas*.

"dīyate yacchivatvaṁ hi kṣīyate pāpapañjaram
dānakṣapaṇayogād dīkṣācetyabhidhīyate
— *Makuṭāgama*: III : 2

Dīkṣā is of many kinds and *śāmbhavī dīkṣā* is one among them. It is said that *mahotsava* is a symbolic representation of *śāmbhavī dikṣā*. In *śāmbhavī dikṣā*, Lord Śiva bestows His grace

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7. *Mṛgendrāgama, vidyā pāda*, Ch. 5.
8. *Mahotsava paddhati* of Aghora Śivācārya, p. 362.
9. According to Jaimini, *Śivatva* is realisation of all qualities like freedom from sin, the possession of desires and purposes that come as their consequences.

having occupied five places-*maṇḍala, kumbha, agni, ācārya* and disciple. Likewise, in *mahotsava* also Lord Śiva takes possession of five places and favours the souls. The deity to which oblations are made is supposed to be *maṇḍala*; *astra deva* represents *kumbha*; the idol of Somāskanda represents *agni*; the chief preceptor (*pradhāna ācārya*) is Guru and all the living beings are deemed to be the fittest disciples to be initiated. Thus the metaphysical importance of Śaiva festivals is vividly explained in the Āgamic Scriptures. Because of this importance it is enjoined in the scriptures that no one should go out of the village when once the festival is started with *dhvajārohaṇa*. Since all the deities are invoked and yoked in the *dhvaja* at the time of *ārohaṇa*,[10] the whole village and its vicinity are deemed to be charged with divine potentials,

That the whole village is in all its purity and divinity during the time of festival may be illustrated by an anecdote also. Once Naminandi Adigaḷ, who by the grace of Lord lit the lamps with water in Araneṛikkoil of Tiruvārūr, participated in a festival of Tiruvārūr and returned home late in the night. His wife asked him to complete his daily duty of *agni-kārya* and to take the meals. Naminandi Adigaḷ, having felt he was defiled by the crowd of the festival, asked her to make preparations for bath. When she went inside the house Naminandi Adigaḷ had somehow fallen asleep. Lord Śiva appeared in his dream and instructed: "Oh, Naminandi, don't feel that you are defiled because of the crowd gathered in the festival. All those people of Tiruvārūr, now deeply drawn towards the festival are my own retinues (*gaṇas*). You come and see my own *gaṇa* of Tiruvārūr." Naminandi Adigaḷ accordingly went to Tiruvārūr and had a divine vision of *Śivagaṇas*. This incident illustrates the fact that during *mahotsava*, all people get purified spiritually. In fact, it is to be noted here, all the rituals duly done in Śaiva temples are the immaculate symbolic representations of thirty-six *tattvas*, five *kalās*, six *adhvās* and other ontological truths of Śaiva Siddhānta. It is

10. *Dhvajārohaṇa Sandhyāvāhana* of Aghora Śivācarya.

only because of this metaphysical bearing of *mahotsava* that the great and unrivalled Samayācāryas St. Thirugñāna Sambandhar and St. Tirunāvukkarasar hymned the eulogy of Śaiva festival.[11]

Now, leaving aside other matters concerning the grand festival, let us turn to and concentrate on particular festivals which reveal the universal outlook of Śaivism.

1. Lamp-festival (dīpotsava)

In the Tamil month of Kārttika (November-December), when the sun enters the house of Vṛścika, the lamp-festival is celebrated. The co-incidence of full-moon day, the asterism *Kṛttikā* and *Vṛṣabhalagna* is the best suited time for this festival. This festival is celebrated for the prosperity of nation, for the abundant growth of wealth and grain, for the favour and delight of all gods, for the bestowal of happiness on the denizens of the nether world, for the accomplishment of all the desired ends and for the warding off all diseases and calamities of cows and other cattles.

Lord Sadāśiva addresses Maheśvara and says: "You exist in the heart of the worlds; and light shines forth in the middle of your heart. Therefore light is in the middle of all the worlds of names and forms. So one should worship God through this light festival". This is the significance of *dipotsava* as given in the Makuṭāgama.[12] It may rightly be held that light-festival is a correct and clear expression of the truths of Śaiva Siddhānta.

Apart from the regular liturgical activities done with saṁhitā mantras, the lamp-festival should be celebrated on the following way. A lamp-pole should be framed out of any of the following trees: Cocoanut, Palmyra, Candana, Campaka,

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11. St. Thirugñāna Sambandhar's Poompāvaippathikam and St. Thirunāvukkarasar's pathikam "Muthu vidhānam..."

12. *Makuṭāgama* VII: 1, 2

Khadira, Bilva, Arjuna, Tintriṇi, Śimśupa, Madhūka, Tilaka, etc. The height of the lamp-pole should be equal to that of *dhvajastambha* and it should be erected in front of the sanctum-sanctorum or *gopura* or *bali-pīṭha*. In order to place the earthen-lamps in a circular form thick sticks should be fastened to the pole lengthwise and crosswise. The whole structure should be covered with dry leaves of cocoanut or palm tree in such a way as to present a conical form. This structure is generally known as 'Śokkapānai'.

After the preliminaries are ministered to by ācarya and his attendants at the bottom of the lamp-pole, lamps should be lighted. As many as 1000, or 500 or at least 100 lamps should be lit and placed inside the structure. The lamp-post now resplendent with hundreds of lamps would appear like *jyoti-liṅga*. In fact, all the Scriptures maintain that the lamp-post is a representation of Lord Mahā Sadāśiva who figures Himself with twenty-five faces. After lighting this structure, thousands of lamps should be lighted and placed in the temple precincts, *gopura, stambha*, tank and *maṇḍapas*. Because of the flames of earthen lamps the dry leaves covering the structure, thick sticks and the post would be ignited. Within a short while the whole structure would be set in flames and would present a blazing coloumn of *jyoti-liṅga*. At the diminishing stage of the flames the *ācārya* should cut the lamp-post at a point leaving three fifth of the post in the upper side and two fifth of the post in the lower side. Care should be taken while cutting the post. The *Kāraṇāgama* gives an account of the consequences of the falling down of the upper portion of the post. It would be beneficient for the ruler and the people if it falls in the east. Untimely death and diseases would occur if it falls in the south-east direction. Fear of theft would be found if it falls in the south. If it falls in the south-west, calamities and other dangers would be met with because of the ruler. If it falls in the west, it would be for the accomplishment of release. If it falls in the north-west, the intellectual calibre of the people would diminish. If it falls in the north, the nation would be prosperous and abound in wealth. And if it falls in

the north-east, then it would be for the victory of nation.[13] The *ācārya* should cut the lamp-post so as to make it fall down in the east, north-east or north. Unfortunately if it falls down in unwanted direction so as to cause evil effects, then the *ācārya* should perform expiatory rites according to the prescribed rules. Then the *ācārya* should collect the ashes from the ignited structure, offer it to Śiva (*mūla bhera*) and then to Caṇḍeśvara and having smeared it in his own body, he should distribute the holy *prasāda* to all the devotees.

One more interesting point to note is that only this festival of lamps goes by the name *'Dīpāvali'* in the Āgamic scriptures: (Vide Kāmikāgama-uttara: Ch. 8.

2. The Chariot-festival (rathotsava)

The chariot festival which is the single biggest public performance to be conducted in the course of a *mahotsava,* usually takes place on the seventh day of the grand festival. While most of the *Śivāgamas* like the *Kāmika, Kāraṇa,* etc., state that chariot-festival should be celebrated on the seventh day, only the *Svāyambhuvāgama* sets forth that *rathotsava* should be performed on the eighth day of a *mohotsava.*

Both the *Kāraṇāgama* and the *Kumāra Tantra* furnish a complete description of *rathotsava.* The mode of construction of various kinds of chariots is given in the *Kumāra Tantra.* According to this *Āgama,* chariots are of eight kinds. The three-wheeled chariot is called Vijaya; four-wheeled as Kāntam and five-wheeled as Śrī keśam. Similarly, Viśālakam is a six-wheeled chariot; Nibhadram, seven wheeled; Śrīviśālam eight wheeled; Bhadram nine-wheeled; and Bhadra Viśālakam ten-wheeled. There is no mention of two wheeled chariot in the *Kumāra Tantra.* But both the *Kāmika* and *Kāraṇa* explain the significance of two-wheeled chariots.

Strictly speaking, *ratha* is a symbol of human body. Śrī Vāgīśamunivar, in his siddhantic work called Jñānāmṛtam written

13. *Kāraṇa (uttara)*: 27 : 60–62

on the basis of the *Kiraṇāgama*, speaks of human body as a chariot and of the soul as a charioteer.[14]

The well known event of the destruction of the three fortresses of Tripura by Lord Śiva is celebrated symbolically as the *rathotsava*. Both the *Kāraṇa* and *Kumāra Tantra* describe various parts of a chariot identifying each part with a particular deity pertaining to the retinues of Lord Śiva and Guha.[15] A consecrated *ratha* becomes a dwelling place for all the deities during the time of festival. It is said that the devotees who participate in this festival and have a reverential vision of Lord Śiva will exist in the world of Śiva along with his ancestors who would be elevated by his meritorious deed and get liberated from the evil effects of their heinous sins. *Rathotsava* bestows victory on the ruler of the country and protects all the living beings.

3. The purifying-festival (pavitrotsava)

Another important festival that takes place in the course of a year is *pavitrotsava*. This is usually conducted in any of the months from Āḍi to Āśvini (July to November). There is a specific rule that *pavitrotsava* should not be celebrated after *dīpotsava* had taken place.

There are so many reasons for celebrating this festival. Firstly, violation and transgression of *mantras* and *kriyās* might have occured in temples due to various reasons like threat from the ruler, fear of theft, ignorance, delusion and so on. As a penitential rite for these aberrations, lapses and deficiencies *pavitrotsava* should be celebrated.

Secondly, so many creatures like flies and insects lose their lives daily inside a temple being drawn towards lamps. Śaivism, being the religion of universal love and devotion, is very scrupulous and vigilant in the welfare of all the living beings. So it provides remedial steps to bestow a peaceful and

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14. *Jñānāmṛtam*, verse: 14

15. *Kāraṇa*, 142 : 7-14 ; *Kumāra Tantra*: 44 : 53-57

blissful life to those souls of tiny creatures, through the Grace of Lord Śiva. One of the remedial steps being offered by Saivism is *pavitrotsava*.

Thirdly, Śaivism shows great concern for the souls that experience the evil effects of their own *karmas* in places called *naraka*. The *Mataṅgāgama* and the *Kiraṇāgama* state that there are as many as 140 *narakas* below the nether world meant for the scourge of sinful souls. In order to minimise the severity of the harassments and hazards of *naraka bhuvanas*, Lord Śiva Himself, out of his infinite compassion, has shown a way through His own Scriptures. The way revealed by Him is the celebration of *pavitrotsava*.

"patanāt trāyate yasmāt tasmād etat pavitrakam"
(Since it protects the fallen souls, it is called *pavitra*)
Kāmika (*uttara*): Ch. 18.

During this festival *pavitra* or sacred threads specially designed for this purpose are invested to all the deities installed and consecrated in temples.

Thus we have seen the universal motives behind the festivals celebrated in Saiva temples. Śaiva festivals are meant for eternal happiness and not for ephemeral pleasures. They are for the benefit of all kinds of souls. The main interest and attention of these festivals even extend beyond the limits of this world, as we have seen earlier. In short, these festivals are the practical expressions of the truths of Śaiva Siddhānta.

Thiru S. Gopalakrishnan: We shall consider the significance and object of conducting several festivals in the innumerable temples of India which vary from place to place both in style and in function.

I doubt whether the word Festival will connote all the meaning which is sought to be conveyed by the word "Utsava". The gay and joy that is felt in every festival may stop with providing pleasures for the senses without including any spiritual attitude towards God.

"Utsava" in the traditional sense means Great Pūjā or Worship:

"Udityutkṛṣṭa Vacanam
Savo Yajña Udāhṛtaḥ
Tasmāt Utkṛṣṭa Yajñatvāt
Utsavaḥ Parikīrtyate.

So every festival in the temple is a great pūjā to worship the deity on special occasions apart from the daily Pūjās. These Utsavas are conducted periodically and vary in style and function according to the Āgama under which the daily worship is performed in the temple, according to the Sthala Purāṇās of the temple and according to the tradition followed in the temples established by great Ācāryas etc.

Broadly speaking worship in temples of Tamil Nadu is done either according to: (1) Vaikhānasa Āgama (2) Pāñcarātra Āgama or (3) Śaiva Āgama. In a few temples worship is done as per Tantra śāstras. The Āgama Śāstras prescribe the rules and procedures as to the performance of Utsavas in the temples. According to Vaikhānasa Āgama Utsavas are classified under three major categories viz.,

1. Kāla Utsava
2. Shradha Utsava
3. Śānti Utsava.

Kāla Utsava is performed on specified dates prescribed by the Śāstras at specified intervals for specified objects. If the Kāla Utsava is not performed due to any reason bad effects will result and so Prāyaścitta is to be performed and then the Kāla Utsava performed.

Shradha Utsava is performed at the instance of devotees for getting certain favours or for getting rid of certain disadvantages like illness, trouble from enemies, poverty etc.

Śānti Utsava is performed whenever bad omens occur like the appearance of comets, falling of planets and stars from the sky, appearance of bloody tears in the eyes of idols in temples, earthquakes, cyclone, formation of ant hills and bee

hives in the sanctum sanctorum of the temples which portend great calamities to the country and the Government as well as its rulers. We have already seen that the word Utsava means "Great Yajña".

In the Puruṣa Sūkta it is stated that the Devas worshipped the Supreme God Lord Nārāyaṇa by performing a yajña. It is said that of all the dharmas, conducting a yajña is the foremost Dharma. Thus worship of the Mūla Puruṣa became the foremost Dharma. The Heavens became glorious only by performing the yajñas. "Tena Nākam Mahimānas sacante". He who performs Utsava is certainly redeemed from the Samsāra or shackles of worldly existence.

Sa Yajño Vo narān yuṣmān Uttārayati niścayam

The Kāla utsavas again fall under different categories according to the interval between them viz. Nityotsava (daily), Pakṣotsava (fortnightly), Samvatsarotsava (annual) etc.

Every day after conclusion of the daily pūjā utsava is conducted. According to Vaikhānasa Āgama there are five idols in each temple viz. (1) Dhruva (2) Kautuka (3) Utsava (4) Bali (5) Snapana.

Usually the Dhruvamūrti is made of stone and the other mūrtis in Pañcaloha or alloy of five metals. There is a special Mūrti called Utsava Mūrti who will be worshipped during the Festivals. But in the Nitya Utsava the Bali Mūrti is carried around the temple and not the Utsavamūrti. Of all the Kāla Utsavas Brahma Utsava is the major Utsava in every temple. It is usually conducted for 9+1 days. Brahmā, the God of Creation first conducted this Utsava for obtaining the Grace of Lord Nārāyaṇa for protecting and sustaining his created beings. The Brahma Utsava consists of the following kriyās:

1. Ācārya Varaṇam i.e.,
   Requisitioning a suitable qualified person to officiate as priest.
2. Mṛtgrahaṇam Aṅkurārpaṇam

Getting the mud from Ant hill with due ceremonies and sowing the Navadhānya (Nine sorts of grains):

3. Thirumañjanam Ārādhanam and Neyvedyam
Bathing the idol, worship with mantras etc. and offerings.

4. Dhvajadaṇḍa Śuddhi and Samsthāpanam
Cleansing the Flag Staff and erecting it.

5. Vāstu Homam - Dhvajapaṭa Pratiṣṭhā — Offering to Vāstupurasa and putting up flag banner.

6. Arcana to Garuḍa, Viṣvaksena and Sudarśana, the deities who help the Utsava to be conducted as per Śāstraic procedure.

7. Bherītāḍanam or Beating of the drums:

8. Dhvaja Ārohaṇa or Hoisting of the Flag:

9. Āvāhana for the Dikpālakas and Pūjā to them: worship of the guardian deities.

10. Installing of Kumbhas or pots filled with sacred water in which 9 Mūrtis are invoked:

11. Aghara Homam - Sacrifice in the Sabhya Agni Kuṇḍa:

12. Navamūrti Pūjā - worship of the 9 deities.

13. Yāgadīkṣā Kautuka Bandhanam—
Tying of yellow thread on the right wrist.

14. Homam - Offerings in the consecrated fire.

15. Deva Pūjā - Worship of the Gods.

16. Utsava Bali - Offering of food to the Utsava deity.

17. Utsava Bhramaṇa - Procession of Utsava Deity.

18. Utsavānte Snapanam Abhiṣekam
Havirnivedanam - Bathing the idol at the end of the festival and offering the oblation.

19. Rājopacāraḥ - Ceremonial honour befitting a king.

20. Nṛtyageyādi Darśanam - Dance and Music.

21. Taking Utsava idol to the Paḷḷi Aṛai (Bed room)

22. Puṣpāñjali - Offering of flowers.

23. Praṇāmaḥ - Obeisance,

The Brahma Utsava which commences with the above rituals is performed for ten days. Every day bathing, worship, offerings, Procession accompanied by auspicious music, Vedic and Prabandha recitation, etc. are performed both in the morning and in the evening. The Utsava Deity is reverentially carried in various Vāhanams (Vehicles) such as Kedayam, Surya Prabhā (Sun) Chandra Prabhā (Moon) Hanumān, Swan, celestial tree, Elephant, Horse, Chariot etc. In the Vaiṣṇavite shrines Garuḍa Utsavam and Rathotsavam are considered most important. Those who worship Keśava in Ratha (chariot) will have no rebirth. In certain temples Kalyāṇa Utsava is performed in the middle of the Brahma Utsava itself. But in many other temples Kalyāṇa Utsava is performed on Paṅguni Uttaram day i.e. the day on which Phalguna, Uttira Phalghuni constellation occurs.

In the Brahma Utsava the God is to be worshipped by all irrespective of their caste etc. It is said in the Śāstras married women who partake the consecrated food offered to Garuḍa after hoisting of the flag will conceive soon and give birth to a beautiful male child. On the Ninth day in the after-noon "Avabhṛta Snānam" is performed. Devotees will have a dip in the holy tank along with the "Chakra" deity. Such a bath will destroy the sins accumulated by each man. Pushpayāga (Floral sacrifice) is performed on the 10th day. Udvāsana Prabandham is recited on the 10th day. The devotees who have been invited for doing service to the Lord are permitted to go back to their respective places. In this function the attributes and glories of the devatās are described and hearing this prabandham will provide much information about the Dikpālas and their functions. The Lord is prayed on every day for granting health, wealth, prosperity and finally liberation from the cycle of births. Dance music and every fine art is dedicated to Nārāyaṇa. The artist however skilled he may be, considers himself to be in the service of God and the element of egoism is absent. As the theme in every song and dance relate to God and his Lilās the devotees who hear and enjoy

the fine arts are made to remember God even as they hear music, witness dance and see other decorations.

The Vaikhānasa Śāstra prescribe Utsava for each month in a year. In the months of Caitra on the full moon day Śrī Nārāyaṇa should be worshipped by decorating the deity with flowers full of fragrance and sandal paste. During the month of Vaisākha, water from holy rivers is brought in big vessels kept in the Sun light and moon light and on the following day the water is gathered in Kalaśa and offered to God. This is being performed as Thiru Ūral Utsavam in Tamil Nadu. During the Jyeṣtha month Sūkṣma Vastram (fine cloth) is offered to Lord and Utsava is performed. During Āṣāḍha month Arghya is offered in a special pūjā. During Śrāvaṇa month Kṛṣṇa Jayanti Utsava is performed. Kṛṣṇa is worshipped by offering milk, curd, butter and ghee. The couples who partake the milk after being offered to Kṛṣṇa will be blessed with a healthy beautiful male child.

In the Bhādrapada month various kinds of sweets etc. are offered to God and then distributed to the devotees. Vijayadaśami Pūjā and Utsava is done in this month. During Āśvayuja month 'Pan' is offered to God and distributed to devotees. Dīpāvali Utsava is done in this month. During Kārtika month on the day of pourṇamī (or full moon) Dīpotsava is performed with lamps burnt with ghee. During Mārgaśīrṣa month every day early in the morning pūjā is performed. The Adhyayana utsava for a period of 20 days is performed in the month. Vaikuṇṭha Ekādaśi Utsava is a special festival performed in the month. During the Puṣya month Makara Sankrānti utsava is celebrated. During Māgha month the Lord is worshipped with Dhūpa (incense) and Dīpa (light). Māsi Magha Festival is conducted in this month. During Phālguna month Śrī Rāma Navami Utsava is performed for ten days. Apart from this, Utsava is performed on the Janma Nakṣatra - day of Āṇḍāl and Ālvārs. Āḍipooram Festival in the month of Āḍi is a special utsava for Srī Āṇḍāl. Similarly Uḍayavar Utsavam, Deśikar Utsavam are also conducted.

Apart from the spiritual benefits there are also social benefits for the society of persons engaged in the conduct of Utsava. The temple is decorated with huge pandal, lit with many lights and festoons are hung. Several persons get their wages for doing these jobs. Almost every cadre of men in the society is drawn in the service of the Lord and while serving also earns his wages. Thus every Utsava is a Socio-religious function which helps man to gain both materially and spiritually.

Meticulous details about the conduct of the Festivals are to be found in the various Śāstras like Marīci Vimānārcana Kalpa Yajñādhikāra Prakīrṇādhikāra etc.

It is high time that we in India should start an in depth study of the various Śāstras with the added advantage of experts fortunately still living.

Śāstraratnākara T. K. Gopalaswamy Aiyangar: It is acknowledged by the Vedas and the Purāṇas that Lord Viṣṇu assumes the Archa form in certain places which consequently become holy by His presence. Tirupati, Kāñchi, Śrī Rangam, Tirunārāyaṇapuram, Tiruvahīndrapuram etc. are considered as the *Divyadeśas* owing to the Lord's presence in the Archa form. The Archa form of the Lord instils hope and solace in the minds of the devotees to indulge deeply in His worship for ever.

Coming to the significance of *Brahmotsavas* in the temples, so far as Tirupati and Kāñchi shrines are concerned, there are adequate purāṇic testimonies to prove that Brahmā, the four-faced Deity and the first created soul among the embodied souls, inaugurated the festivals of the Lord on a grand scale to give vent to his overflowing devotion to the Lord in the Archa form.

The main purpose in constructing temples and consecrating the Archa idols and celebrating the festivals on a grand scale is to invite the attention of all people to congregate and rouse

and substantiate our relationship with the Lord. The Upaniṣads, the Brahma Sūtras and the Gītā, endorse only the theoretical tenets. The festivals on the other hand, are the practical demonstrations of the philosophical tenets to stimulate the spiritual fervour dormant in each and every soul. The emphasis is laid that the sovereignty of Service is the birth right of every soul. This privilege is lost and absolutely forgotten in the beginningless myriads of births and deaths owing to the lack of right knowledge regarding God, Soul and matter. The intimate relationship of master and servant 'Svāmi dāsabhāva' otherwise known as Śesha śeshi bhāva is predominantly stressed in the philosophy of festivals. The aforesaid relationship is perennial and it cannot be denied either by Him or by the souls. Yāmunācārya expounds the same conception that the relationship of the protector and the protected cannot be wiped out.

Brahmā, the creator who had mastered the Vedas and realised his status in the universe, was prompted by the overflowing Bhakti towards the Archa form of the Lord. He found outlets to exhibit his Bhakti in various ways and one such outlet was the celebration of a grand festival to demonstrate Lord's glory or Vaibhava on the one hand and the implicit performance of service or Kainkarya of the souls on the other. The Vāhanam arrangements do bear philosophical significance. Some Vāhanams, such as elephant, horse, palanquin and chariot are meant to indicate the infinite regal glory of the Lord, by reason of His being eulogised in the Vedas as Rājādhirājā, King of Kings and a Householder, Lord of the Seven Worlds (Saptalokīgṛhasthaḥ) etc. The Āgama portions of the Brahmōtsava testify to the participation of the divine chiefs with their followers in the festival and guarding the devotees who congregate to attend the festival. Brahmā, the official creator is one among them. In the Thiruvengadam hill, a small chariot known as Brahmaratham is being taken before the Vāhana procession of the Lord. This indicates by implication, that Brahmā together with his retinue starts the procession announcing the grand arrival of the Lord to the

devotees. Even now this procedure is in the Tiruvengadam hills during Brahmotsavam and consequently this phenomenon testifies to the appropriateness of the annual festival having been named as Brahmotsavam.

With regard to the Vāhana arrangements, there is much ethics and philosophy governing them. The first of the Vāhanas is *Śesha Vāhana*. This is a clear indication to the world of devotees to recall to their memory, the uninterrupted service or Kaiṇkarya which the Lordly serpent as a Nitya Kiṅkara (eternal servant) renders in the world of Bliss, or Paramapada. The Śesha Vāhana is intended to teach by practical demonstration how it is open to every enchained soul to derive such a joy in service in the state of mukti, on seeing the Lord cordially welcoming and enjoying service of the Serpent Lord on the one hand and beholding on the other, the Lordly serpent intimately and willingly serving Him by his coiled body with his thousand hoods affording shade to the Lord. Every one of the devotees is sure to utter a cry of fie on his life and be prompted immediately to take up to the means of attaining Him and serving Him similarly. Sri Poykai Āḻvār expounds the intimate service rendered by the Śesha Serpent to the Lord in all His movements. While sitting, he will transform into throne, while walking, he will serve Him as an umbrella, while standing, as sandals, while sleeping, he will convert himself into a couch and pillow etc.

> Seṉṟāl kuḍaiyām irundāl Singāsanamām
> Niṉṟāl maravaḍiyām nīl kaḍaluḷ - eṉṟum
> Puṇaiyām maṇiviḷakkām pūmpaṭṭām pulaku
> Maṇaiyām Tirumārk karavu.

Yāmunācārya reiterates the same idea in the following stanza and justifies the appropriateness of the term Śesha applied to the Lordly serpent.

"Nivāse śayyāsana pādukāmśukopadhāna" etc.

The *Hamsa Vāhana* or the Swan transport is sure to remind the devotee of the incarnation of the Lord assuming the form

of a Swan. In that shape, He assumed the guise of an Ācārya to Brahmā and imparted instructions once again in the Vedas and restored the entire Vedic records to him when they were snatched away by a demon. This fact is revealed by Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār in the line 'Annamāy munivarōṭu amarar ēṟṟa arumaṟaiyai veḷippaṭutta ammān tannai'. The Hamsa Vāhaṇa conception ought to have struck Brahmā himself at the time of the inauguration of the festival, to perpetuate the memory of the Lord for restoring him to the position of a creator and bestowing upon him the stolen records in the form of the Vedas. Without the Vedic Records he was utterly blind to proceed with the office of creation, entrusted to him. The Lord, gracing the Swan transport will thrill any devotee if he realises the redemptive mercy of the Lord for restoring the Vedas which are the authorities on transcendental matters for our guidance and felicity.

The *Simha Vāhana* indicates that the Lord is the omnipotent entity and consequently He is the power-distributing agent to every one in the world. This is intended to show that the lion which is considered to be the most powerful among the animal species and which is deemed as the King of the animals in the spacious realm of the forest, receives its energy and power from Him and Him alone. The Simha Vāhana graced by the Lord will definitely call up to our mind not only His perfection of glory as the lion of the lions but also as the peerless Puruṣasimha. The idea inculcated in the Bhagavadgītā that whatever is pre-eminent or the essence of any thing, powerful, effulgent, glorious or Illustrious, should be taken to have sprung as an integral part of His energy, is found reflected and demonstrated in the Simha Vāhana.

The *Kalpa Vrikṣa Vāhana* which is a special feature in the Brahmotsava of Tiruvengadattān, indicates beyond doubt that the famous Kalpaka tree imbibes its capacity and power of conferring boons on the solicitors only from Him and Him alone. He is the super donor among the donors who themselves derive their riches from him and is thus the ultimate Banker.

This is a specific lesson to the celestial beings who are also the participants in the Brahmotsava, to be aware of the fact that the ultimate donor or grantor of the boons is not the Kalpaka tree, but Lord Viṣṇu who abides in it as an immanent or Antaryāmin.

Garuḍa Vāhana is pre-eminent among the Vāhanams. Lord Viṣṇu is known as Garuḍadhvaja, having the emblem of Garuḍa on His banner. Garuḍa is permanently present in the Dhvaja Stambha in His Shrine. Garuḍa, belonging to the species of birds, is divine in origin and he is declared as the embodiment of the Vedas. He is popularly called Suparṇa in the Vedic literature and his physical features are presented in the Vedas in terms of the Vedic Sacrificial technique.

Vedānta Deśika brings out the same Vedic import in a beautiful stanza in his Garuḍapañcāśat. Yāmunācārya specifically expresses that Garuḍa is the embodiment of the Vedas as Vedātmā Vihageśvaraḥ. Garuḍa is stated in the purāṇas to render intimate service to the Lord by quick flights to the spots of danger to save the devotees.

He as an embodiment of the Vedas appears to announce to the devotees that the Lord riding on him is the ultimate Reality expounded in the Vedas. This Vāhanam stimulates the fact in the minds of the devotees that the Supreme Tattva or Paratattva is shown prominently by the Vedas signified by the form of Garuḍa. Garuḍa is the pratipādaka śabda and the Lord is the Pratipādya artha and the relation between them is eternal. The Garuḍa Vāhanam has two attractive features. One is the beautiful spectacle of beholding the holy feet of the Lord resting on the two hands of Garuḍa. The other is the visible spiritual splendour of Kaiṅkarya (Kaiṅkarya Śrī) transparently beaming forth in the face of Garuḍa. These two factors are sure to render every one burst into joyous tears as to look forward for the day when he will also render similar service to Him. The very thought of the Lord on Garuḍa will definitely inspire one to feel that the impediments hampering the spiritual growth disappear immediately by the violent

flutterings of the wings and by the active movements of the gigantic and adamantine beak of Garuḍa. This affords the Spiritual delight consequent upon the removal of the obstacles that obstruct to the fulfilment of the desired objects. That is why Garuḍa Vahanam is the selection made by the majority of the devotees at Tiruvengadam. The union of Garuḍa with the Lord is sure to recall to our memory the pose which He assumed when He hurriedly took a flight on Garuḍa to save Gajendra, involved in imminent danger. It may suggest also that the Lord's two feet held in high esteem by Garuḍa on his hands represent the Vedas and the Divyaprabandhas of the Āḷvārs. Both the feet branch off from Him representing Sanskrit and Tamil both signifying Him alone.

The *Mohini Avatāram* is to show how benevolently the Lord lends his support to those who follow the virtuous path and strive for moral uplift. The feud between the demons and the divine beings subsequent to the acquisition of nectar from the milky ocean was so terrible that the Lord was compelled to assume the form of a lady possessing enticing beauty to have the demons lost in His beauty and render help to the celestial beings.

The haughtiness of the powerful demons towards self-aggrandisement was taken by Him as a moral sin to be punished. Thus the assumption of a female form is prompted by His redemptive mercy to vouchsafe perfection to them who surrendered to Him for help.

Hanumanta Vāhana is obviously a demonstration of the immense service of the monkey chief Hanumān to whom 'Manishāda' or Lord Rāma or Viṣṇu was the Highest tattva and to whom service or Kaiṅkarya was the highest puruṣārtha. This Vahana will also remind us of carrying Rāma and Lakshmaṇa to the vicinity of Sugrīva and introducing them to him. This is also intended to recapitulate the immense service he rendered to Goddess Sītā and now he consoled Lord Rāma by fetching Sītā's message to Him. Above all, Hanumanta Vāhanam discloses the loveable disposition of the Lord even

towards the fickle monkeys in spite of His infinite glory and greatness "paratve sati saulabhyam."

Sūrya prabhā and *Chandra prabhā* Vahanas are the positive evidences to demonstrate that He is the Light of Lights (jyotiṣām jyotiḥ) and that from Him the powerful luminaries receive luminosity and function in the cosmos. This is obviously a clear and conclusive demonstration of the Upaniṣadic truth expounded in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad as "tasya bhāsā sarvamidam vibhāti". The Sūrya prabhā Vahana graced by the effulgent Lord seated in the centre of the circular Orb, calls up to our memory, the valuable import of the Gayatri mantra (Savituḥ bhargaḥ). The dhyāna śloka of the Gāyatrī mantra is found clearly reflected and demonstrated in the Sūrya prabhā.

dhyeyaḥ sadā savitṛmaṇḍala madhyavartī Nārāyaṇaḥ.

The last of the Vāhanas is *Rathotsava* which is a universal function. All the devotees irrespective of caste, creed or sex, can participate actively and render service to Him. All are chained to His feet gracing the interior of the chariot by the ropes tied to the chariot. While drawing the chariot the devotees are inspired by the beating of the drums, blowing of the conches and waving of chowries indicating the hails of Victory to the Lord. Simultaneously the loud utterances of Govinda by the devotees boom in the air, supersaturating the minds of the devotees with spiritual inspiration and elevating them as it were to the highest ecstatic plane. Every devotee will feel as though he had plunged deep in the nectarine ocean of His redemptive mercy and devotion. The Purāṇas and the Āgamas endorse that after beholding the Lord in Chariot, the devotee will not be subjected to further births. "Rathastham Keśavam dṛṣṭvā punarjanma na vindati".

This chariot festival is a clear demonstration of the Upaniṣadic truth that our body is to be taken as a chariot wherein the Lord abides. Just as the outer chariot in the festival is drawn carefully and safely to the place of destination so also the Chariot-like body which is to be treated as the

temple of God should be conducted and carried cautiously and gradually to reach its goal of liberation by moral ropes in the form of śāstraic injunctions. The body is a dynamic temple of God, whereas other consecrated temples where the archa Lord remains are static.

The idol worship (Samūrta yajña) is thus a permanent institution which can continue for ages unlike amūrtayajña or worship through yāgas which requires Sacrifices, Rtviks and expensive paraphernalia, and these latter are consigned to the limbo of forgotten things as soon as the yāgas are finished. Further, to own that Śeṣavṛtti or service to Him is the birth right of every living being, there is the custom of tying a sacred silk cloth, (worn) by the Lord round the head of the officiating Kaiṅkaryapara (in the presence of the Lord) on congregational occasions to qualify him with fitness to render service to Him. This custom is in vogue in all Vishṇu temples which is now frequently put to practice in the shrine of Tiruvengaḍattān at Tirumalai.

Thus the entire scheme of Brahmotsava is a large scale demonstration of the fundamental and foundational tenets expounded in the Upanishads:

1. that Lord Viṣṇu is the Ubhaya vibhūti nātha.
2. that Kaiṅkarya or service to God rendered here in this world is a rehearsal to the continuation of the same Kaiṅkarya in the world of Bliss.
3. and that Kaiṅkarya is our exclusive right to please Him here in the Archa form and hereafter in the form of Paravāsudeva.

Thiru C. N. Singaravelu: Jainism and Buddhism were in the ascendant in South India at the close of the sixth century A.D. The Saiva Ācāryas, Gñanasambandar and Thirunāvukkarasar came on the scene at the early seventh century and revived Hinduism in general and Śaivism in particular. There is reason to think that before those Acāryas roused the people to Śaiva

consciousness the temples were getting into disuse and some were even covered with sand. The event in Thirumaraikkāḍu where the two great Acāryas opened the main gate of the temple is symbolic of the decadence of Saivism just prior to the advent of these Śaivite saints. There was also an incident in the life of Saint Thirunāvukkarasar in which he was responsible for uncovering the temple called 'Vaḍathaḷi' in Paḷaiyāṛai town. The temple was covered over with sand by the Jains and Thirunāvukkarasar had a divine instinct of the presence of the temple and undertook a fast and intense prayer until Lord Śiva intervened through the Ruler of the locality to uncover the temple. Naturally when the temples were not put to much use the temple festivals also were not thriving.

The Śaiva Ācaryas not only sang the glories of the temples but also of the festivities traditionally conducted in the temples. One *Padigam* from Saint Thirugñānasambandar will illustrate this point. A great devotee of Thirugñānasambandar, by name Sivaneyar of Mylapore had a beautiful daughter called Pūmpāvai. He brought her up with the idea of giving her in marriage to Thirugñānasambandar. But, alas, she died of snake bite just prior to the saint's visit to Mylapore. But Sivaneyar did not lose heart. He cremated her body, gathered the bones in a mud pot and preserved it until the Saint came to Mylapore. The pot was then brought and placed before the Saint outside the temple at Mylapore. The Saint then sang the famous *padigam* (a string of 11 verses) beginning with 'Maṭṭitta Punnayang Kānal Maṭa mayilai' at the end of which the pot burst and the maiden rose with folded hands fresh and beautiful like Goddess Lakshmi from the lotus flower. The substance of the Padigam as pithily put by Sekkizhār is as follows :-

> "If it is a fact that the purpose of life in this world is to feed the devotees of Lord Siva and to witness with joy the *festivities* celebrated in the temples, then let Pūmpāvai come back to life before the people of this world."

Saint Thirugñānasambandar has in this padigam described the festivals conducted in each month of the year and exclaimed in each stanza whether Pūmpāvai was going to leave this world without witnessing the festival.

The festivals described by Thirugñānasambandar are given below :-

(1) In the Tamil month of *Puraṭṭāsi,* Pūraṭṭāthi festival presumably to Chandrasekarar.

(2) In the month of *Aippasi,* Thiruvoṇam festival, a star sacred to Thirumāl.

(3) *Kārthigai* month, the festival of lights.

(4) *Mārgaḷi* month, famous for Thiruvāthirai festival.

(5) *Thai* month when Pūsa festival is celebrated.

(6) *Māsi* month when in Magha star the gods are taken to the sea shore.

(7) *Paṅguni* month in Uttira star the marriage of Lord Śiva with Goddess Pārvati is celebrated.

(8) *Chitrai* month, Full moon day festival.

(9) *Vaikāsi* month, Potrroppu festival, that is the festival of the swing.

(10) *Āni* month Peruncānti festival which is now known as Pavittirotsavam.

It is remarkable that the festivities referred to by Thirugnānasambandar in the seventh century are still being celebrated in most of the Saiva temples.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked the leader and the participants for their interesting speeches. He also thanked the audience present.

V

REPORT OF SEMINARS

Under the auspices of the Institute of Traditional Cultures, Dr. K. V. Raman, M.A.,Ph.D., Prof. & Head, Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Madras gave an illustrated talk (with slides) on the 'Art and Culture of Thailand' at 4-30 P.M. on Tuesday, the 7th September, 1982 in the Department of Archaeology. Prof. P. Thirugnanasambandhan, M.A.,L.T. presided. The following is the report of the Lecture.

Dr. K. V. Raman: For a student of ancient Indian history and culture, a visit to Thailand is indeed a dream fulfilled. I could not realise the depth of the cultural ties between India and Thailand until I visited that country and its ancient cities and beautiful monuments. It is astonishing to find all our major ancient cities and towns there also. The following are some of the place names of Thailand: Dvāravati (Dwaraka), Ayuttaya (Ayodhyā) Lob Buri (Lava-Puri), Kanchanapuri, Pratana Nagara (Praton Nokorn), Prachena Nakorn (Pracina Nagara), Aranya Pratesh, Buri Ram, Phishulok (Vishuloka) Indralok, Swarṇalok, Chantapuri, Vajrapuri (Petchburi) Nakaru Sri Thamaraj etc. The ancient capital of Siam kingdom was called by the beautiful Sanskrit name 'Sukothai' which is a compound of the words Sukh and Uthai meaning "Dawn of Happiness". The ancient portion of the present Bangkok City was known as Rathakosa and it was founded by the kings of Chakri dynasty who were known successively as "Rāma". There is a place called Suphan Buri which is Suvarṇapuri. Many scholars have opined that the "Suvarna Bhūmi" of the ancient Indian texts included Thailand.

Language:

The Thai language itself has received considerable influence from Sanskriṭ and Prakriṭ so that we find many familiar words

like *Karuna* (Please) *Swatee* (*Swasti*, welcome) *Chan* (Jal or water) *Devalaya* (Hindu temple) *Vidyalaya* (College), *Prasat* (Prāsāda-temple) *Dhyāna*, *malai* (mālā - garland) mandop (maṇḍapa). Since Thailand had been a Buddhist country, Prakrit or Pali words are freely in use like *Dhamma*, *Sangha*, *Bikku*, *Jatakas*, *Chedi* (Chaitya) etc.

Personal names:

The personal names of Thai people, both male and female, offer another interesting field of cross cultural study. I could find several Indian names such as: Prem, Sagar, Siddhi, Latcharoj, Vimal, Piriya (Priya). The name H. E. King of Thailand is Adulyateg Bhumpal and his coronation name is Rama IX. The name of Thailand's Prime Minister is Mr. Prem Tinsulanonda. Among the female names we find frequent occurrence of names like Uma, Patuma, Subhadra, Latchimi, Ratna, Rukmini, Vanida (Vanita). One of the queens of Thailand was known by the name Sunanada-Kumariratna.

University:

University or a College is called "Vidyalaj" and there are many of them in Bangkok city such as Mahachula, Tamsadat etc. The University for fine arts is appropriately called "Silpa-korn" University. The Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts of this University Prof. Subhadradia Diskul is a well known scholar and expert on Thai art and history and is very familiar with art history of India as well. The teacher is held in high regard as "achan" (āchārya) and I could see the students bowing in *añjali* to the teacher in the old Indian tradition.

Roads, Parks & Shops:

A drive through the beautiful roads of Bangkok could reveal to me the several fascinating Indian names, such as Rachavidhi Road, Yuvaraja Road, Fatchaprasong Road, Maitri Road and Asoka Road. A fashionable locality of Bangkok is called "Sukamvit". One park is named Lumphini Park (after the Lumbumi gardens) and another as "Patumavann" (a lotus-forest). Shops, hotels and studios also bristle with Sanskrit names,

There are: Suriya Studio, Chitralata shop, Indra Hotel Lecla Art Production, Preeta Pharmacy, Ram Tailors. One of the leading hotels at Bangkok has rooms named "Raja Room" and "Noparatane (Navaratna) Room".

National Museum:

One has only to visit the National Museum at Bangkok to appreciate the rich religious and sculptural heritage of Thailand. There are exquisite sculptures of Buddha in different postures and styles. We can see the influence of the classical Gupta style of India on many Buddhist sculptures of Dwaravait period (7th to 11th century A.D.) noted for their transparent apparel, charming and serene face and graceful features. Influence of the Eastern Indian sculpture style of the Palas (of Bengal) is easily recognisable. A bronze image of Avalokiteswara Bodhisettava of Sri Vijaya period is a superb example of the Pala influence. But at the same time, many of the sculptures display local idiom and traditional features. The names of the different halls and galleries of the National Museum are interesting. They are named as: Thatsina Phimuk, Uttara Phimuk, Patchima Piraluk, Vasanta Phirman, Vayusthan etc.

Hindu Gods:

The presence of fine sculptures representing the Hindu gods and goddesses serve to remind us of the spread of Hinduism in Thailand during the earlier period. The images of Viṣṇu predominate. He is represented with four hands holding the conch (śaṅkha), the disc (chakra), gadā (club) and one hand showing *abhaya-mudrā*. The Viṣṇu image found at Chaiya in the southern Thailand is dated 4th–5th centuries A.D. and displays affinity with the Mathura and Amaravati styles. At a place called Sitep (Sri Deva) in north central Thailand several Hindu images including those of Viṣṇu and Sūrya were found. At Ubon Rachathani (Rajadhāni) a figure of Ardhanārīśvara was found.

The religion as practised in Thailand is often described as an amalgamation of three traditions — Buddhism, Hinduism and

animism. In the National Museum are also seen big sculptures of Gaṇesa, Śiva, Umā and Garuḍa. These sculptures follow the Hindu traditions of iconography. Even minor Hindu divinities like *"aṣṭadikpālas"* (guardian deities) Yakshas, Kinnaras, mythical animals like the *Vyāli* and the *makara* are found freely used in Buddhist temples.

Brahmā :

Temple for Brahmā is very rare in India. But one is surprised to see a flourishing shrine for Brahmā who is regarded as the God of Good fortune, in a busy locality of Bangkok city. It is situated within the compound of a star hotel named Erawan Hotel. I was told that a series of misfortunes occured during its construction and the Brahmin priests, when consulted, advised them to build a shrine for Brahmā to ward off evil. It brought good luck to the hotel and he is regarded as the God of Good Fortune. People including the local Chinese flock to the temple day and night, and offer pūjā. They believe that the offerings bring good fortune and luck to them.

Garuḍa :

Garuḍa is extremely popular in many of the south east Asian countries like Indonesia and Thailand. Garuḍa is the national symbol of Thailand as is found on the letterheads of official letters. Business houses also use Garuḍa as a crest in their offices. It is a sign of great prestige. Vishṇu mounted on Garuḍa is a popular motif often seen on the entrance gate or lintel of the Buddhist temples. Garuḍa is also the personal emblem of king of Thailand who, according to the local belief, is associated with Vishṇu. Thus Buddhism and Hinduism were easily incorporated into traditions of South East Asia.

Rāmāyaṇa :

The two immortal epics of India, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* as well as the Buddhist jātakas provided an important cultural link between India and South East Asia. In Thailand the Rāmāyaṇa story was very popular from early times. The Thai version of the Rāmāyaṇa is known as "Rāmakien"

and is depicted in sculpture, painting, classical dance and puppetry. Exquisite sculptural scenes from the Rāmāyaṇa datable to the 12th century A.D. are found at Lop Huri. Bas Reliefs of the Rāmāyaṇa are also seen at Wat-Po in Bangkok City. Around the temple of Emerald Buddha in the Grand Palace at Bangkok city our eyes can feast on the Rāmāyaṇa paintings executed in pleasing and brilliant colours. The paintings go round the entire verandha of the temple and are considered to be the longest series of paintings in the world. These were originally painted during the reign of King Rāma I the founder of the city of Ratnakosa (Bangkok) in 1782 but the paintings have been periodically renovated and redrawn. In the shrine of Emerald Buddha, paintings depicting the Buddhist Jātakas are also found.

Dance:

The classical dance of Thailand is often based on the Rāmāyaṇa themes. They are enacted with the attractive coloured traditional dress and costumes in the courtyard of the temples to the accompaniment of soft and melodious instrumental music. They are of slow-paced movements with emphasis on the *mudrās* or hand gestures. There are regular programmes of classical dances in Bangkok hotels and restaurants.

Hindu Temples:

There is an old Hindu temple in the city of Bangkok. It is locally called "Devālaya" to which Buddhists also come for worship. The priest of the temple is a Thai Brahmin. The present incumbent whom I met is a Brahmin, a young man with charming and tender Thai face. He was wearing Panchakacha dhoti and having the Śikhā (tuft) in the Indian fashion. He could speak only Thai and some halting English. He told me that his ancestor hailed from Uttar Pradesh and came to Thailand some 200 years ago. His father's name was Vāmadeva Muni. They belong to the family of "Rājakur (Rājaguru) or Royal priests" and officiate in the royal ceremonies of the Thai kings. They have intermarried with the Thais and become one with them. Inside the Devālaya, there are shrines for

Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa. Worship is offered here for Buddha also. The priest recites Sanskrit mantras during worship. He has some manuscripts with him where mantras are written in the grantha script of South India.

Bangkok is a busy city of international importance, its population is cosmopolitan in character - with the Chinese, Burmese, Malays, Indian and European or Western in sizable numbers living there. Indians, mostly composed of the Sindhis, Punjabis, Sikhs are doing well in the field of business. A few old Tamil settlers are also there. Indians are highly appreciative of the land and the people of Thailand and are full of admiration for their traditional hospitality, soft nature and tolerance. Some of the Indians of older generation whom I had occasion to meet recalled with pride their association with Netaji when he was in Thailand organising the I.N.A.

The Indian residents of Bangkok are running a Thai Bharat Cultural Samājam where a school and classes for Yoga are run. Numerous Thai students are also studying there. A beautiful Hindu temple with a prayer hall has also been established. It is rendering fine service to both the communities.

The Thai people, especially the intellectuals, evince keen interest to know more about India for which they have love and respect as the holy land of Buddhism and Hinduism. Private cultural bodies like the Volunteer Group of the National Museum, Bangkok and the Siam society are doing notable service in the field of dissemination of knowledge about the history, art and archaeology of Thailand and India. More should be done by Indian Government, Universities and private bodies to cultivate and strengthen the ancient cultural bonds by arranging for peridoical exchange of students and research scholars, books and journals besides inviting a larger number of Thai scholars to our country.

The Chairman in conclusion thanked the Lecturer and the audience present.

VI

REPORT OF SEMINARS

The Institute of Traditional Cultures held a seminar at 4-15 P.M. on Tuesday the 21st December 1982 in Room No. 48, University Departmental Building on the "Concept of Withdrawal and Return in the Growth of Civilisation" led by Dr. A. Krishnaswami, M.A.,Ph.D., Editor, History of Tamil Nad, Directorate of Tamil Development, Madras-1 under the chairmanship of Prof. P. Thirugnanasambandhan, M.A.,L.T. Director of the Institute. The following is the report of the proceedings of the seminar.

The chairman after introducing the leader requested him to lead the seminar;

Dr. A. Krishnaswami: According to Arnold Toynbee the origin of civilisation was due to response to challenges both human and physical. The criterion of growth is the growth of self-determination. The break-down of civilisation is due to loss of self-determination. This loss of self-determination may be understood from a couplet of Tiruvelluvar namely—

செய்தக்கவல்ல செயக்கெடும்—செய்தக்க
செய்யாமையாலும் கெடும் (குறள் 466)

When there is growth of Self-determination there results Social growth or growth of a society. A civilised society is different from a Primitive Society. A society in the process of civilisation may be divided into two segments, society and the Individual.

Society and the Individual:

There are three different views concerning a social organisation.

(1) The individual in the society is the reality and he must maintain his individuality independent of the society.

(2) The society is the reality and the individual lives for the society and he must merge his existence with that of the society.

(3) Society is an organism. The individuals are merely the sensal organs of a living society.

If we examine the above three concepts, we can find that all of them cannot stand the test of severe criticism.

(4) The ultimate truth about a growing society is that the Individual is the *Source of action* and the *Society is the field of action.*

Creative Individuals and Uncreative Majority :

A Society or a civilisation consists of two unequal divisions. The leaders in a growing civilisation may be called *creative Individuals* and *Creative Minorities*. Different from the Creative Individuals are the uncreative Majority. The creative Individuals *withdraw* themselves from their normal and usual avocations, attain eminence in a particular field of human and civilised activities.

After having attained eminence and inspiration they return to the society and preach and spread their doctrines among the uncreative majority. The uncreative Majority follow the teachings of the creative Individuals and there is growth of civilisation. The examples for the creative Individuals are Jesus Christ, Saint Paul, St. Benedict, St. Gregory the Great, Thuycidides, Machiavelli and others in the Western civilisation.

In the Hindu society we have the Vedic Ṛṣis, the Buddha, Mahāvīra, Śankarācārya, the Nāyanmārs and Ālvārs in the Ancient period. During the 19th and 20th centuries we have Swami Vivekananda, St. Ramaṇa, St. Rāmaliṅga, Sadāśiva Brahmam, Mahātmā Gandhi and a host of others.

Definition of creative Individuals

Poem No. 182. of Puṟanāṉūṟu by Iḷamperuvaḻuti was drowned in the sea is an excellent description of the qualities

of creative Individuals. The literary and philosophical contents of this verse are unique.

உண்டால் அம்ம இவ்வுலகம் இந்திரர்
அமிழ்தம் இயைவதாயினும் இனிதெனத்
தமியர் உண்டலும் இலரே. முனிவிலர்
துஞ்சலும் இலர் பிறர் அஞ்சுவது அஞ்சி
புகழெனின் உயிரும் கொடுக்குவர், பழியெனின்
உலகுடன் பெறினும் கொள்ளலர், அயர்விலர்,
தமக்கென முயலா நோன்றாள்
பிறர்க்கென முயலுனர் உண்மையானே.

Withdrawal and Return in plant life:

The principle of withdrawal and Return may be discerned in the life of plants and herbs. Paddy, vegetable seeds, wheat and other cereals are withdrawn from the fields, given rest for some months and then they are sown in the fields for giving higher yield and produce.

A Passage in the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians describes the principle of withdrawal and Return very clearly.

> "That which thou sowest may be bare grain either of wheat or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body and to every seed His own body. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in un-corruption. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown in a natural body; it is raised in a spiritual body".

Withdrawal and Return in the Life of Jesus christ:

Jesus was the babe born to a royal heritage – a scion of David or a son of God himself. He comes down from heaven to be born on Earth. He is born in David's own city of Bethleham, yet finds no room in the Inn and has to be laid in a manger. He is saved from Herod's murderous design by being secretly taken to Egypt. Then Jesus returns to enter into His kingdom of Judah. He is hailed by the Multitude as the son of David. Upon his baptism by John, he withdraws

into the wilderness for forty days and returns from his temptation there in the power of the spirit. He duly suffers the death of a mortal man in the crucifixion. He descends into the tomb in order to rise immortal in the Resurrection. In Ascension he withdraws from earth to heaven in order to come again with glory.

Saint Paul:

Paul of Tarsus was born a Jew in a generation when Hellenism had its impact upon the Syriac Society. In the first phase of his career he persecuted the Jewish followers of Christianity. After his sudden enlightenment on the road to Damascus, Paul withdrew into the desert of Arabia. Three years later, he became a jealous christian and visited Jerusalem. Then he preached a new dispensation where there was neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free. He preached this reconciliation in the name of Christianity which he had formerly persecuted. This last chapter was the creative chapter of Paul's Career. The first chapter was a false start.

Saint Benedict:

Benedict of Nursia was sent as a child from Umbria to Rome in order to receive the traditional upper class education in the humanities. But he revolted from the life of the capital and withdrew into the wilderness at this early age. For three years he lived in utter solitude. Then he became the head of a monastery in Mount Cassino. An important feature of the Benedictine order was the prescription of manual labour for the monks. The movement was an agricultural revival on the economic plane. It worked not from above downwards but from below upwards by evoking the individual initiative through enlisting religious enthusiasm.

Saint Gregory the Great:

Gregory held the office of the Governor of Rome in the 6th century A.D. He found himself faced with an impossible task. The political and economic condition of Rome in that

century was a pathetic one. He decided to withdraw completely from his secular duties and to become a Christian monk. His withdrawal was of three years' duration. In course of time he occupied the Papal throne from 590 to 604. He accomplished three great tasks (1) He reorganised the administration of the estates of the Roman Church in Italy and abroad. (2) he negotiated a settlement between the Imperial authorities and the Lombards. (3) he laid the foundations of a new spiritual empire-a new Roman Catholic empire - by spreading Christianity in England and other parts of Europe.

Muhammud the Prophet :

Muhammad was born in an age when the relations between the Roman empire and Arabia were coming to a crisis. Muhammad embarked on his life work about his fortieth year and it was achieved in two stages. The first withdrawal of his was from the Arabian desert areas to Syrian desert ports as a caravan trader and came into contact with the followers of Judaism and Christianity. His entry upon a purely religious mission was a sequel to his return to the parochial life of Arabia. The second or politico-religious stage was begun by the prophet's withdrawal of Hegila from his native oasis of Mecca to the rival oasis of Medina. After a seven years withdrawal and absence Muhammad returned to Mecca as lord and master of one half of Arabia.

Withdrawal and Return in the lives of the creative Individuals in the Hindu world :

During the growth stage of the Indic Society that is during the Vedic age we have the growth of the Vedic literature in the four stages of the Samhitās, Brahmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and the upanishads. The Vedic Ṛṣis withdrew to a forest life and experienced a spiritual revelation of the Āraṇyakas and upanishads and they were incorporated in the four Vedic lore of Rig, Yajus, Sāma and Atharvana. They became the starting points of the Vedanta and Advaita philosophies which were later commented upon by 'Śaṇkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva,

The upanishadic doctrines were also the foundation upon which the Buddha and Mahāvīra preached their atheistic philosophies.

The Buddha :

Gautama was born a Śakya aristocrat at a time when the aristocratic order was challenged by new social forces. His personal resort to this challenge was to renounce a world which was becoming inhospitable to aristocrats. He withdrew from his palace and family life and for seven years, he sought enlightenment through ever-increasing asceticism. After attaining the four Noble Truths, he returned to the Indic world. After attaining the light for himself, he spent the rest of his life in imparting it to his fellowmen. In order to impart it effectively, Buddha organised a Sangha also.

The Saivite Nāyanmārs :

The Bhakti movement in South India expressed itself in the growth of the higher religions of Śaivism and Vaishṇavism during the Pallava and Chola periods in the Tamil country. The four important creative Individuals of the Bhakti cult were Gñānasambandha, Nāvukkarasar, Sundarar and Maṇikkavācakar. Gñānasambandha was withdrawn by the Lord himself from his maternal care and was fed by the divine milk of the universal mother. Then he became the first and foremost of the Nāyanmārs by composing numerous Tēvāram padigams in Tamil which could be sung musically according to tunes. His songs spread throughout the Tamil country from Vēnkaṭam to cape Comerin. The divine milk of supreme knowledge withdrew him from family life and returned to the religious stage as an advocate of the Saivite monotheism through songs laden with music.

Tirunāvukkarasar :

Beginning his life as an orthodox saivite he withdrew for a short time to the Jain monastery at Pātaliputra (Cuddalore. N.T.) and learnt Jain philosophy. By a divine interference he had withdrawn from Jainism to Saivism, from a Jain philosopher to Saivite Nāyanmār. His Tēvāram padigams are noted for their melody and monotheistic doctrines. But Gñānasambandhar

and Nāvukkarasar stood for the revival of vedic Śaivism and for the Monotheistic supremacy of Saivism.

Sundarar :

From literary and epigraphical sources and from internal evidences in his Tēvāram hymns Sundarar was later in date to Sambandhar and Appar. He was also withdrawn from his early family life by divine grace and he followed the profession of spreading Saivism by his Tēvāram Songs. He considered himself as a Friend of Lord Siva. But he returned to family life by marrying twice. Though born as an Ādiśaiva brahmin he married non-brahmin ladies, Paravaiyār and Sangiliyār and thus revolted against the rigid caste system of the 8th century A.D.

Māṇikkavācakar :

He began his career as a minister of the Pāṇḍya king, Varaguṇa I. But he withdrew from his political career and became a Saivite devotee. He returned to the world of Saivism by composing the two famous practical Mystical works of Tiruvācakam and Tirukkovaiyār.

I Śankarācārya :

Ādiśankara was a native of Kaladi in modern South Kerala. He withdrew from this mundane life and became an ascetic in his early life. He travelled throughout Bhārat and founded the five monasteries indicating the fundamental unity of India (1) in the Himalayas, (2) Dwārakā (3) Jagannathapuri (4) Śringeri and (5) Kānchi for stablising Vedic Hinduism and propagation of the Advaita philosophy.

Other examples of withdrawal and Return :

In the lives of B. G. Tilak, St. Ramaṇa of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, St. Rāmalinga of Chidambaram, Sadāśiva Brahmam, Mahātmā Gandhi, Aravinda Ghosh and other great religious and political leaders, this principle of withdrawal and Return can be brought to light.

In conclusion, the chairman thanked the leader and the audience present.

VII

REPORT OF SEMINARS

The Institute of Traditional Cultures held a seminar at 4-15 P.M. on Wednesday the 16th February 1983 in Room No. 48, University Departmental Building, led by Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A.,D.Litt., on the Ālwārs in Tamil Nad and the Dāsas in Karnataka'. Prof. P. Thirugnanasambandhan, M.A.,L.T., Director of the Institute presided. The following is the report of the proceedings of the seminar.

The chairman introduced the leader and requested him to lead the seminar:

Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao: The Vedanta philosophy in its two forms, the Absolutistic and the theistic traditions is the living religion of the Hindus. It goes by the popular name of Hinduism, a name given by the Persians to describe the people, who lived beyond the river Sindhu. The real word to describe the Vedantic religion is Vedic or Sanātana Dharma. The doctrines of the Vedantic philosophy have proceeded on *two fronts*.

The Ācaryas of the Vedantic school have commented upon the triple texts (Upaniṣad, Brahma Sūtra and the Gītā), and sang hymns in praise of Viṣṇu and Śiva in Sanskrit. For the average man, who has not had the necessary discipline in the study of the Sanskrit language nor learned in the nuances and delicate touches of Indian logic and its subtleties, it is not possible to comprehend the meaning or the message of the ācarya's works. Further, tradition forbids the study of the Vedas by a large section of men and women. These texts have to be read in conformity with a strict code of conduct and rigid rituals under the guidance of a guru. This approach is not open to all. This is the *sanctum* approach.

There is side by side with this, a popular approach to the scriptures, by a section of men drawn from all castes and at

all levels; called God-lovers or mystics. From the fullness of their authentic experience of God-realization they have propagated the doctrine of the Vedantic religion to the masses in poems and songs set to strict canons of classical Karnatic Music, drawing examples from the work a day world of pots and pans in their respective regional languages. They are the singers, the Āḻwārs of Tamil Nadu and the Dāsas of Karnataka.

They had first hand experience of God and His grace. The bliss they experienced and the wisdom that dawned on them, the enlightenment that gave them a rebirth, they wanted to share with the masses. They mixed with the people freely and they set aside rickety, inhuman conventions that separated men. Their wants were few, they had no thought of the morrow. They never lived even a moment without God's thought. They felt a moment as an aeon when separated from the Lord. They never indulged in God-eclipsing activities, they travelled all over the country with tambourine and cymbals in their hands, singing the glory and grace of the lord, beckoning foolish humanity to the call of the Lord.

These godsmen have been the chief prop in arousing the dormant, spiritual potentialities in men and awakening the sane, sober moral ideal of dharma, the unenforceable good law, to which the modern clever man who has only learnt to live by the Indian penal code which gives external punishments and lo! these men are called the practical men.

In every human being there is a soul deeper than the bio-psychic-physical accoutrement. That is the muffled spiritual self hushed down deep. To ignore this potential in man and to describe him in psycho-physical and endocrinal terms lands us in the fallacy of oversimplification and the picture is not true. In the words of the eminent writer of mysticism Francis Thompson, Man has a,

> " Swinging wicket, set between
> The Unseen and Seen",

The hinges of the wicket door are differently adjusted in different men. In the average man and woman it is so adjusted

to swing out vigorously towards the Seen and no visible light from the Unseen is allowed to filter in. In some others it swings alternately between the Seen and the Unseen; It is so skilfully balanced that it moves to and from the Seen to the Unseen, keeping in touch with both of them.

These men, the mystics, help by swinging the door to the Unseen and so hinging it. These mystics are described in the Bhāgavata as the compassionate who wander in the world drawing those who have turned their face away from God and Dharma, hence sunk in grief.

Janasya Kṛṣṇād vimukhasya daivāt
adharma śīlasya suduhkhitasya
anugrahāyaiva caranti nūnam
bhūtāni bhavyāni janārdanasya

In our age of secular rationalism and advanced scientific technology, there hangs by the word mysticism a lot of dust with serious misunderstanding. There is fierce polemics carried on concerning both its imperative need and brash denunciation. Some describe the mystics in strict scientific terms, as men with troubled minds of highly suggestible nature, with intemperate imagination given to seeing visions, experiencing ecstatic mood and living eccentric lives. This is a satire and an irreverant sneer arising from the ignorance of the mood of the mystics. The mystics are not queer, eccentric men. They are not inspired idiots but sensible men interested in human welfare, totally oblivious of the demands of their silly self. Some of them are lost in the vision of the Lord and to them nothing but God vision interests them. They are the psalmists.

The way to have mystic vision is the evocation of the grace of the Lord, not the studious logical staircase of reading the śastras; The upanișads opine "He cannot be attained by sheer instruction, nor through listening to many scriptures; He is attained by them whom He chooses. To such a one He reveals His self".

Nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyaḥ na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
yam eva eṣa vṛṇute tena labhyaḥ Tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm svām.
— *Kaṭha Upan. I. 2.23.*

The Āḷwārs constitute a powerful group of godsmen, who preceded Rāmānuja and inspired him to construct the imposing theistic school of metaphysics. The word Āḷwār means one who has merged himself in God-experience, and has poured out his experience in lyrical ecstasy, from his varied moods. Some of them, (why all of them) share an earnest deep yearning for God's love. They hold the view and echo Augustine's thought "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts shall find no rest, save in Thee". The Āḷwārs are the pioneers in the quest of the spirit and are the morning-star of the spiritual reformation. They are the Columbuses on the unchartered sea of God-ward navigation. They are the God-intoxicated souls of heroic temper, soldiers of Truth and servants of God. They are drawn from all castes, not excluding the lowest; The group includes Aṇḍāḷ, the saintly poetess of high excellence. Tradition holds the view that the central concept of the philosophy of Rāmānuja, that ultimate Reality is a complex-organic whole of three entities, *souls* and the *universe* and *God*, inseparably united; God being the soul, and the other two being the body of the Lord, used by Āḷvārs was appropriated by Rāmānuja.

"God is the indweller, Jīva and the universe are His body". The absolute in which they are (cit and acit) included is one. They are eternal with God but are not external to Him. The three categories always exist as one and never in isolation from one another. It is a complex (Viśiṣta). The compound word *Viśiṣṭādvaita* is dissolved, *Viśiṣṭasya Visiṣṭa-rūpeṇa* advaitam Viśiṣṭādvaitam or *Viśiṣṭayoḥ* advaitam. Here the distinction is not denied; and at the same time, the *organic* unity of the whole is affirmed. The relation among the three is unique. It is called *apṛthak siddha* relation. Effort is expended by the metaphysicians of the school to distinguish

the relation from the category of *Samavāya* of the Nyāya school. The Lord is ever organically connected with His creation. His hunger for the soul is greater than the soul's yearning for tne Lord.

Another important doctrine which the Āḷvārs have given the world is the doctrine of *prapatti*, *Śaraṇāgati* or *Surrender*. This is the pathway to God which any one irrespective of his caste, sex or rank can follow. The word *pra-pad* means take refuge with or piously resign and fling one's self on God's compassion. Six characteristic marks constitute Śaraṇāgati.

1) The determined resolve to follow the will of God alone. 2) Not to cross His purposes 3) The complete faith that He alone will save us. 4) The effort to seek help from Him and Him alone and none-else. 5) Yield up one's soul to Him in all meekness.

Ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjnam
Rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso goptṛtvavaraṇam tathā
Ātma-nikṣepa kārpaṇye ṣaḍvidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ.

This doctrine has for its principal limb self-surrender. The surrender must be done without any reserve and the devotee should do it joyously that he has no other means whatsoever in the art of protecting himself. That is the confession of helplessness.

The Dāsas of Karnataka headed by Purandara, followed by Kanaka, Vijaya, Gopala, Viṭṭhala, Jagannātha, and a few others constitute the Dāsakūṭa in contrast to the Vyāsakūta, the Sanskrit commentators.

The Dāsas followed closely the metaphysical tenets of Sri Madhva's philosophy. Madhva was not inspired by them but they were inspired by Him. Sripadarāja of Mulabagal started the tradition, though Narahari Tīrtha, the follower of Madhva wrote one or two songs. The dāsas wrote in Kannada language. Purandara and Kanaka were initiated by the giant intellect Vyāsarāja. The Dāsas were initiated by their masters giving

them a pen name (Arikita) and cymbals. The Arikita for Vyāsarāja's songs is Kṛṣṇa, for Vādirāja, Hayavadana, for Purandara, Viṭṭhala etc. All the dāsas put themselves in the relation of a willing joyous obedient servant to the Lord. The 'dāsa bhāva' is an approved form of bhakti adumbrated by Sri Madhva, exemplified fully in his three manifestations as Hanuman, Bhīmasena and Madhva. The dāsa relationship to the Lord is ever there. Man is man and God is God. They are never equal at any state. They differ infinitely even in the Mukta state. Not only this, the dāsas envisage a graded scale of eligibility, which should be strictly observed. The hierarchy starts from the Lord who alone is independent and the rest including Lakṣmi and the rest are dependent. Vāyudeva is the supreme soul, third in rank. He is not Nitya mukta but has achieved mukti by his stupendous sādhana. In the scheme of sādhana strict adherence to the *tāratamya* among the deities is insisted on. In this matter Madhva asks his disciples to worship all deities including Śiva and others, as the retinue (parivār) of the Lord, not as independent one. Anyadevatāpūjā is not ruled out, but the supremacy of Viṣṇu is upheld over all else.

The absolute reality of the world and the scheme of fivefold differences are asserted as eternal verities. Bhakti to the Lord does not warrant the sādhaka from giving up his daily scripture-ordained duties. His devotion must be sandwiched between true and complete knowledge of the Lord, (Jñāna) and absolute non-relish for all other things (vairāgya) Ābrahma stamba paryantam asāram cāpyanityakam Vijñāya jāta-vairāgyo Viṣṇu pādaika samśrayaḥ.

Devotion to Lord Nārāyaṇa must be free from *wrong views* i.e. that there is identitv between the Lord and the soul, that there are greater persons than the Lord, that there are equals to the Lord, that there is difference between Him and his limbs his attributes, his self and his incarnations. The sādhaka should not hate His devotees nor the scriptures that praise the Lord.

Purandara, the great dāsa has the special title to eminence because of his being the pioneer preceptor of Karnatic Music. He not only gave us lakhs of songs but also graded the lessons for the learner, which is continued to this day-Svarāvali, Gītam, Jati, Alankāra, Thāya, padas. These mystics have done more than the writers of Sanskrit treatises to awaken the spiritual faith in men in the medium of music with examples drawn from common life.

These mystics are the salt of the earth. Through them filters, light divine into the world of darkness. But for them the world will remain in complete blindness. Their devotional songs are the most powerful antidotes that keep us from the terrible attritions of our over-organized mechanical world of desires, of love and hate. Their words are wisdom, their gestures benediction, their conduct consecration and they take us safe to God-ward journey.

The Bhāgavata declares that to attain the feet of the Lordi it is not enough if one is learned or does tapas or takes to sannyāsa. He attains liberation only when he bathes in the dust particles of the great devotees "Vinā mahat pāda rajobhiṣekat". It is through the birth of such saints the family is purified, the mother attains fulfilment and the earth gets sanctified.

Kulam Pavitram jananī kṛtārtha
Vasundharā puṇyavatī ca tena
apāra samvit sukha sāgare' smin......
Pare Brahmaṇi yasya cetaḥ.

They do not so much convince us. Their sacred fire transforms at sight (darśanādeva sādhavaḥ). These mystics are the great forces for the moral regeneration of the masses. They effect this by their love and compassion. They involve themselves in the lives of men and bring about the regeneration by love. These mystics embody in their life and actions, the five principles adumbrated by Satya Sai Baba, Satya, Dharma, Śānti, Prema and ahimsā. Prema is central to all virtues. Their

patience and tolerance has no limit. Sky is the limit. The Bishop in Victor Hugo must be good to have told the Police that he presented silver sticks to the thief and that he did not steal them. Christ must have been Love incarnate to "ask that member of the mob to throw the first stone at the fallen woman who has not sinned. It is only compassion incarnate that made Sitā tell Hanumān from punishing the demoness, holding forth the charter of toleration in the memorable phrase, 'who is there in humanity that has not committed offences.' The true mark of mistake is toleration. It is not a stroke of policy; it is the article of their faith. The Saivite mystics identified God with Love and declared that those who view the two as distinct ones are the ignorant.

In conclusion, the chairman thanked the lecturer and the audience present.

NEWS AND NOTES

1. Extract from UNESCO FEATURES, No. 784/785 (1983)

On February 23, President Suharto of Indonesia presided at the ceremonial reopening of the great Buddhist temple of Borobudur, built a 1,000 years ago by the Shailendra dynasty in Central Java. Present was Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, the Director General of Unesco who launched the international campaign so that what he called "one of the largest and most beautiful monuments of the Asian religion" could be dismantled, cleaned, repaired and put back together. The temple has 2,508 sq. metres of relief carving and 504 statues of the Buddha.

President Suharto expressed his gratitude to Unesco. and the international community that provided expertise and $ 6.5 million towards the cost of restoration which was nearly $ 20 million.

Contributing governments were Australia, Belgium, Burma, Cyprus, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Ghana, India, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxemburg, Malaysia, Mauritius, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom and Tanzania.

2. Extract from 'German News', Vol. XXV No. 3, March 17, 1983.

INDIA AT FRANKFURT MUSIC FAIR: The recently held Music Fair in Frankfurt was a bewildering collection of the latest in technological sophistication and innovations in musical instruments ranging from grand pianos, classical concert guitars, saxophones, oboes, trumpets and trombones to accordions, exotic percussion instruments from Asia, and new sound mixer systems as well as futuristic concepts for sound production.

India's contribution to the world of music can rarely be correctly estimated. But her variety of ancient and modern musical instruments was demonstrated in part by the Indian firm that took its stand at the fair for the second time at the Musik Messe, Frankfurt, in February, 1983.

The firm, Gorsons (India) Exports, displayed the sitar, tabla, veena, santoor, flute, harmonium and other instruments typical of India and the crowds thronging the stand served to demonstrate the fact that these instruments as well as the music emanating from them needed to be more widely publicised. To an extent, of course, people in the Federal Republic of Germany are familiar with Indian music and instruments because numerous Indian artistes have been visiting the country from time to time to give concerts.

Crowds at the fair were predominantly of the younger generation thereby signifying the rising value of music "as an irreplaceable medium for emotional balance in a rational and materialistically oriented world".

Megalithic Sites: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has discovered two important megalithic sites dating back to 2000 B.C. one in Kambarmedu in Therazhundur village in Thanjavur district and another in Melasathamangalam near Pondicherry. The discoveries were made by Thiru C. L. Suri, Superintendent and Thiru P. Narayana Rao, Deputy Superintendent of ASI.

Kambarmedu is stated to be the place where the great Tamil poet, Kambar, lived. He is the author of Kamba Ramayanam, the renowned Tamilised version of the great epic. Kamabarmedu is a mound measuring about 30 feet in height and 100 feet long. Excavations near the mound yielded Chola coins and brick structure in the first layer and neolithic tools in the second layer. The third layer contained a large number of megalithic tools which are about 4000 years old. Hand-made potter redware and utensils were also found. The silt formation

in the third layer suggested that the area was eroded by some river which has now dried up or has shifted its course.

Excavations at Melasathamangalam, which is 6 km. from Arikamedu near Pondicherry, has for the first time revealed tools of megalithic period near the dried up bank of the Sankarabharani. The first layer contained Roman coins, the second neolithic tools and the third megalithic tools and pottery.

It is significant that while in Arikamedu only Roman coins were found dating back to the first century B.C. the megalithic settlements at Melasathamangalam date back 2000 years B.C. (Courtesy - Tamil Arasu (English), November, 1983. Madras).

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Dr. C. R. Sarma	National Integration as Reflected in Telugu Literature.	July-December, 1976

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Dr. S. T. Satyamurthy	Museums in the Modern World.	Part II, 1966
	The Art of Wooden Carvings among Tribals in India & Africa.	July–December, 1977
Dr. S. Seetha	'Grāmas' in Indian Music	Part I, 1968
	Some Less Known Composers of Karnatic Music	July–December, 1969
	Some Aspects of the Music of the Ancient Tamils.	January–June, 1975
	Role of women in the preservation of carnatic Music during the late Medieval period.	July–December, 1975
	Lavani–The Marathi Folk Musical Form.	July–December, 1976
	Pakkasaraṇi Mārga of Venkaṭamakhi	July–December, 1979
Prof. K. Seshadri	Mystical Tradition & Contemporary Society.	July–December, 1969
Thiru K. S. Shankara Aiyar	The Impact of the West on Indian Society and Law.	Part I, 1959
Mrs. B. Sitamahalakshmi	The Concept of Bhakti in Advaita Vedanta.	January–June, 1972
Thiru Vidwan M. Shanmukham Pillai	St. Aruṇagirināthar – His Life & Works.	July–December, 1975

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Thiru Vidwan M. Shanmukham Pillai	Works of Kavimani Desika Vinayakam Pillai.	July December, 1976
Dr. V. Shanmuga-sundaram	The Omnigerent Modern State.	Part I, 1966
Dr. S. Shankar Raj Naidu	National Integration as Reflected in Hindi Literature.	July-December, 1976
	Rāmāyaṇa Through South East Asia.	January-June, 1978
Dr. B. R. Sharma	Gaṇapati – Vināyaka in Mahābhārata.	July-December, 1975
	Gaṇapati in Panchadevopāsanā.	July-December, 1976
	Gaṇapati as God of Wisdom & Lord of Learning.	July-December, 1979
Thiru S. Shanmuga-sundaram	Image of women in Tamil Folklore.	July December, 1975
Thiru S. Singarajan	Archives and History	July-December, 1980
Mr. K.V. Soundara Rajan	Rites (Saṁskāras) Connected with Death (Preta) and after (Pitṛ.)	Part II, 1966
Mr. Sourindra Kumar Khan	Decline of Buddhism in Ancient India.	July-December, 1977
Prof. R. Srinivasan	Rejuvenation of Some Languishing Arts.	Part I, 1960

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Prof. R. Srinivasan	The Art of Kathākālakshepam	Part I, 1960
	Symbolism & Tradition	Part II, 1965
	Sri Thyāgarāja: Musician, Saint & Mystic.	Part I, 1967
Dr. A. Subramanian	The Festival of Nine Nights - A Study.	January-June, 1974
	A Rare Tamil Work on Child Diseases.	January-June, 1978
Thiru K. Subramanian	Social Life of Folk Artists in Ancient Tamil Nadu.	January-June, 1980
Dr. N. Subramanian	Historiography: India and the West.	Part II, 1962
	Freedom: India and the West with special reference to France.	Part I, 1964
	Hinduism at the Crossroads.	Part II, 1964
	Democracy; Britain & India.	Part I, 1965
	Hinduism and Secularism	Part I, 1966 & Part II, 1966
	The Philosophy of the Unesco.	Part II, 1966
	The Tragic Theme in Tamil Literature.	Part I, 1968
Dr. N. Subramanian & V. R. Mani	The Second International Conference: Seminar on Tamil Studies.	Part I, 1968

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Dr. P. Subramanian	Urban Life in the Tamil Country.	January–June, 1977
	The Economic Condition of the Peasantry in the Tamil country in the latter part of the 19th century.	July–December, 1977
	Caste System in the Tamil Country in the 19th century.	July–December, 1979
Dr. S. V. Subramanian	National Integration as Reflected in Tamil Literature.	July–December, 1976
(Maharishi) Suddhananda Bharati.	All About Yoga	July–December, 1974
Dr. C. S. Sundaram	References to Mythology in Nandivarman II Pallavamalla Grants.	July–December, 1976
	Pallava Copper Plate – Grants.	January–June, 1977
Dr. D. Sundaram	Tradition, Social Structure & Social Reform.	January–June, 1976
	Rural Health Care – A Socio-Cultural Study.	January–June, 1978
Dr. P. K. Sundaram	Impact of the West on Indian philosophy, Thought and Religion.	Part II, 1961
	Is Nescience One?	July–December, 1972

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Thiru S. D. Sundaram	Folk Art Forms of Tamil Nad.	July–December, 1975
Thiru M. Sundar Raj	Non-Aryan Elements in Rg. Veda.	July–December, 1972
	The Divine Lover of the Sangam.	July–December, 1974
	Heroes of Gods in Tamil Sangam.	January–June, 1975
Thiru N.D. Sundaravadivelu	K. Namasivaya Mudaliar	July–December, 1976
Dr. Sundarraj Manickam	Christian Missions & their Attitude towards Caste observances in the Churches of Tamil Nadu–1606–1850.	January–June, 1978
Dr. V. Suryanarayanan & V. Uma.	Education & Development: A Case Study of Malaysian Indians.	January–June, 1980
Dr. A. Swaminathan	Dissemmination of Vedic Knowledge & Philosophy in the Chola period.	July–December, 1977
	Adimaikal (slaves) in the Chola Temples & Maths.	January–June, 1978
	Crime & Punishment under the Cholas (850-1360 A.D.)	July–December, 1979
Dr. B.G.L. Swamy	The Date of the Tevaram Trio: An Analysis and Reappraisal.	January–June, 1975

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Dr. B.G.L. Swamy	Kalabhra Interregnam: A Retrospect & Prospect.	January–June, 1976
	Recent Light on Medieval Saivism	July–December, 1977
Dr. B.G.L. Swamy & K.R. Nanjundan	The Kalamukha Sect in the Tamil country.	January–June, 1972
Dr. A. Swamy	A Rare Potsherd (Rouletted Ware) Inscription from Arikamedu.	July–December, 1973
Thiru C.R.N. Swamy	Some Aspects of Burmese Culture.	January–June, 1977
Mr. A. R. Syed Abbas	Islamic Culture with reference to India & S.E. Asia.	July–December, 1977
Dr. (Mrs.) K. Thamarajakshi	Non-Economic Factors in Economic Development.	Part I, 1964
	Social aspects of Mechanisation of Agriculture.	Part I, 1965
	Human Resources Development through Unesco.	Part II, 1966
Dr. V. Thillainayakam	The Library Sciences: The Tradition of Tamils.	January–June, 1973
Thiru A. Thirumalai Muthuswamy	Bibliography on Tamil Culture	July–December, 1972 January–June, 1973
Dr. K. D. Thirunavukkarasu	The Ethical Philosophy of the Ancient Tamils.	July–December, 1973

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Prof. P. Thirugnana-sambandhan.	National Integration as Reflected in Sanskrit Literature.	July-December, 1976
	Indian Culture - An Amalgamation of Dravidian & Aryan.	July-December, 1976
	Indian Tradition of Religious Harmony.	January-June, 1977
	Bhagavad Gītā	July-December, 1978
	Indian Architecture and Iconography from Original Sources (Sanskrit).	July-December, 1979
	Bhārati & Traditional Culture	January-June, 1980
Dr. A. Thiruvengadathan	The Ritualistic and Cultural aspects of Festivals.	July-December, 1980
Dr. Umacharan Mohanty	Danda Jatra in Kondh village.	January-June, 1977
	The Muttadary System: A Study of State Tribe Interaction.	January-June, 1979
Thiru K. Unni Kidav	National Integration As Reflected in Malayalam Literature.	July-December 1976
Prof. D.J.E. Van Lohuizende Leeuw	An Important Exhibition of Indian Art.	Part II, 1961

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Prof. T.N. Vasudeva Rao	The Pattini Cult	January-June, 1979
Tmt. R. Vedavalli	Todi & its Exposition	January-June, 1977
Sri K. M. Venkataramiah	Role of Poets of Tamil Nadu in the Society through the Ages.	July-December, 1978
Sri Vedam Venkataraya Sastri	The Contribution of Early Cholas to Telugu language	January-June, 1978
Dr. N. Veezhinathan	Anubhūtisvarūpāchārya - His Contribution to Advaita Vedanta.	Part II, 1968
	The Concept of Karma in Jainism & Buddhism.	January-June, 1974
Sri (Mudikondan) Venkataramier	Puppet Dance, Drama: An Ancient Art of India.	Part I, 1960
Thiru T.V. Venkataramani	Culture & Society in Lakshadweep.	January-June, 1979
Thiru P.S. Venkatasubba Rao	Tradition in Religion	1957
	The Ramayana & Mahabharata in Greater India.	July-December, 1973
Dr. S. Viswanathan	Festivals in Saiva Temples	July-December, 1980
Sri T. Viswanathan	Problems facing Bharata Nāṭyam to-day.	Part II, 1967

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Dr. Vladimir Soucek	Mutual Understanding of West and East.	Part II, 1966
Dr. William W. Van Groenou	Notes on Intermediate Technology.	July-December, 1976
	Muslim Artisans in Ahmedabad - An Exploration of the Change from Block Printing to Screen Printing.	January-June, 1977
Prof. Yousuf Kokan	National Integration As Reflected in Urdu Literature.	July-December, 1976

REVIEW OF BOOKS

'ORIGIN, EVOLUTION AND REFORM OF THE TAMIL SCRIPT' — Published by the Institute of Traditional Cultures, University Buildings, Madras-5.

The *'Origin Evolution and Reform of the Tamil Script* is a collection of nine seminar papers presented at a special seminar held under the auspices of the Institute of Traditional cultures commemorating the Silver Jubilee of the Institute in February 1983. It is a feast to the scholars particularly those who have a special flair for the development of the script of Tamil.

Iravatham Mahadevan, former member of I.A.S. and a National Fellow, has made a scholarly study in depth on the subject. He not only conducted the proceedings of the seminar but also made a very valuable contribution. "The chronology of the Inscription can be determined from a comparative study of the palaeographical features of the script and by making use of the linguistic and historical data culled from the Inscriptions". (page 7). This caution to use literary sources as evidence cannot be contradicted.

K. G. Krishnan in his paper *Origin of the Tamil Script* after having evaluated the cave inscriptions comparing them with other epigraphs, concludes "The Tamil script began to take shape in a period prior to Asoka's times". (p. 18). Since he had been specialising in Brahmi script in Tamil Nadu for over two decades, his arguments bear the stamp of his systematic, serious and scholarly disposition towards his field of specialization and a marked objectivity.

Gift Siromoney in the paper *Origin of the Tamil-Brahmi Script* aims at a balanced account on the evolution of Tamil Brahmi script and presents a picture of the complexity of the problem. His warning that "excavations need to be undertaken

in the Madurai region and these may provide useful material that may lead to a better understanding of the origin and development of the Tamil-Brahmi script" (page 29) indicates how the matter is still in a nebulous stage warranting further reserach.

P. Shanmugam in his paper *Graffiti and Tamil Brahmi* points out how some scholars hold that Brahmi script (Tamil Brahmi) was derived from the Graffiti and according to others from the Harappan symbols. But after having taken into consideration the graffiti from Uraiyur, he considers the co-existence of graffiti and Brahmi and the survival of graffiti even after the disappearance of the Brahmi on potsherds; it appears as though Brahmi was not developed from the graffiti. Thus he is inclined to fall in line with pro-Harappan symbols' affinity to the Brahmi script. However he cautions that Uraiyur evidence which is the basis of his opinion, may be treated as tentative until it is supported by similar evidence".

Dr. K. V. Raman is very cautious in his paper, *Tamil Brahmi and Vaṭṭeluttu- Aspects regarding Chronology and Evolution*. "The evolution of two sets of Tamil scripts simultaenously remains to be explained. Whether they had any dynastic or regional affilitation is worth being investigated further" (page 39). He thus urges for a careful and cautious investigation of the matter.

Mr. Natana Kasinathan and Krishnamoorthy deal with the two aspects touched upon by K. V. Raman, namely Evolution of Tamil script and Evolution of Vaṭṭeluttu script respectively. Mr. Krishnamurthy gives exhaustive illustrations to justify Vaṭṭeluttu as an ancient Tamil Script. According to him, Vaṭṭeluttu script lost its premier place by 10th to 11th century in Pāṇḍyanādu and Kongu country in the 13th century. But in South Travancore it continued for some more centuries with many distortions and was called Malayalam. He also suggests that there is a vast scope for research in this field.

Kodumudi S. Shanmugam in his paper, *Reform of the Tamil Script* poses the question, 'Does the system of Tamil writing need modification or radical change? He feels a few modifications are essential and also worked out a bi-lingual key board with the Tamil and Roman letters. He suggests the present Tamil letters can be used more similar to the use in the Roman alphabet placing *Uyir* and *Mey* successively.

Mr. S. Ramaratnasabapathy in his paper *Reform of Tamil Script* says that the language which is simple can prosper quickly so that it could be made very easy to print and type.

The papers presented at the seminar on the theme of Tamil Script are of vital importance. Tamil is accepted by every one, not only as a refined but also an ancient one belonging to several centuries before the Christian era. The epigraphical evidences left behind by the ancient rulers of Tamil Nadu speak a volume about the development of Tamil script. Even great dynasties such as Maurya, Harshavardhana of Northern India could not but use the Tamil script along with their own.

A consensus on the subject of this kind among the scholars and specialists is difficult. The diversity is not because of lack of evidence, but larger quantity of evidence scattered all over the South India not only fascinate the scholars but also make them refrain from any kind of dogmatic conclusion. Scholarship is always subject to change and growth according to the availability of sources much so in a subject of this kind. So it is not surprising when Prof. P. Thirugnanasambandhan while welcoming the participants of the seminar spoke about "the possible link between the script of the Harappan seals and the Tamil Brahmi script and the further evolution of Indian scripts from Brahmi and the need for reform in the Tamil script to meet the modern needs of the printing press and typewriter and particularly of the children who are to learn the language with ease". (Page 2)

Dr. M. Santappa in his inaugural address commending the theme of the seminar said "The script of a language is largely determined by various factors geographical, material, political etc and how its evolution has a bearing on the interaction of such factors." (page 2)

Besides seminar papers it also contains the observations made by participants at the seminar.

G. RAVINDRAN
Research Scholar, Dept. of Journalism, University of Madras.

OBITUARY

We regret to report the passing away of Dr. T. M. P Mahadevan, formerly Director, Radhakrishnan Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras and a member of the Governing Body and Executive Committee of the Institute of Traditional Cultures. He was born on the 24th August 1911 and passed away on the 5th November 1983. He was born in a humble family and was orphaned even in his early years. He enjoyed the affection and guardianship of Swami Rajeswarananda during his early life. He pursued his scholastic and collegiate studies for the most part in Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home. He had the good fortune to receive the blessings of one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Sri Ramana Maharishi and Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi of Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt.

He took his B.A. Hons. Degree in Philosophy in the Madras University with First Class first rank in 1933. He pursued his research under the guidance of Professor P. N. Srinivasachari of Pachaiyappa's College Madras and later under Professor S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, Professor of Philosophy, University of Madras. Dr. Mahadevan became the Head of the Department of Philosophy in the University of Madras in September 1943 and worked as Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor till 1964 when the Department was upgraded into a Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy. He was naturally chosen to be its first Director. He guided a number of Research scholars both Indian and foreign. During the last three years of his life he had the distinction of holding the post of National Professor. The Government of India conferred the title of Padma Bhushan in recognition of his vast contributions in the field of Philosophy. Dr. Mahadevan was an Advaitin to the core. He faithfully lived and practised the life of Advaitin. He travelled all over the world and participated in several All India and International gatherings of Philosophers and presided

over some of them. His contact with the philosophers all over the world was wide and rewarding. He was a good orator in both English and Tamil. His delivery was slow, clear and measured. He has left behind monumental works on Advaita and Hinduism such as Gaudapada Karika, Sambandha vartika etc. He has bequeathed his wealth for the Sankara Vihar in Madras devoted to the exposition of Advaita.

P. THIRUGNANASAMBANDHAN
Director.